SIR
THOMAS BROWNE.
RELIGIO MEDICI,
AND OTHER
ESSAYS

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RELIGIO MEDICI, URN BURIAL, CHRISTIAN MORALS, AND OTHER ESSAYS.
BY
SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

INDEX.

Religio Medici vii
Hydriotaphia: Urn Burial lxxxiv
Letter to a Friend cxxiii
Christian Morals cxxxix
On Dreams cxciii

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RELIGIO MEDICI. TO THE READER.

TO THE READER.

CERTAINLY that man were greedy of life, who should desire to live when all the world were at an end; and he must needs be very impatient, who would repine at death in the society of all things that suffer under it. Had not almost every man suffered by the press, or were not the tyranny thereof become universal, I had not wanted reason for complaint: but in times wherein I have lived to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention, the name of his Majesty defamed, the honour of Parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitly, imprinted: complaints may seem ridiculous in private persons; and men of my condition may be as incapable of affronts, as hopeless of their reparations. And truly had not the duty I owe unto the importunity of friends, and the allegiance I must ever acknowledge unto truth, prevailed with me; the inactivity of my disposition might have made these sufferings continual, and time, that brings other things to light, should have satisfied me in the remedy of its oblivion. But, because things evidently false are not only printed, but many things of truth most falsely set forth; in this latter I could not but think myself engaged: for, though we have no power to redress the former, yet in the other the reparation being within ourselves, I have at present represented unto the world a full and intended copy of that piece, which was most imperfectly and surreptitiously published before. This I confess, about seven years past, with some others of affinity thereto, for my private exercise and satisfaction, I had at leisurable hours composed; which being communicated unto one, it became common unto many, and was by transcription successively corrupted, until it arrived in a most depraved copy at the press. He that shall peruse that work, and shall take notice of sundry particulars and personal expressions therein, will easily discern the intention was not publick: and, being a private exercise directed to myself, what is delivered therein was rather a memorial unto me, than an example or rule unto any other: and therefore, if there be any singularity therein correspondent unto the private conceptions of any man, it doth not advantage them; or if dissentaneous thereunto, it no way overthrows them. It was penned in such a place, and with such disadvantage, that (I protest), from the first setting of pen unto paper, I had not the assistance of any good book, whereby to promote my invention, or relieve my memory; and therefore there might be many real lapses therein, which others might take notice of, and more than I sus-

pected myself. It was set down many years past, and was the sense of my conceptions at that time, not an immutable law unto my advancing judgment at all times; and therefore there might be many things therein plausible unto my passed apprehension, which are not agreeable unto my present self. There are many things delivered rhetorically, many expressions therein merely tropical, and as they best illustrate my intention; and therefore also there are many things to be taken in a soft and flexible sense, and not to be called unto the rigid test of reason. Lastly, all that is contained therein is in submission unto maturer discernments; and, as I have declared, shall no further father them than the best and learned judgments shall authorize them: under favour of which considerations, I have made its secrecy publick, and committed the truth thereof to every ingenuous reader.

THOMAS BROWNE.

RELIGIO MEDICI.

FOR my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all,—as the general scandal of my profession,—the natural course of my studies,—the indifferency of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion (neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another),—yet, in despite hereof, I dare without usurpation assume the honourable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font, my education, or the clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my unwary understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my country; but that having, in my riper years and confirmed judgment, seen and examined all, I find myself obliged, by the principles of grace, and the law of mine own reason, to embrace no other name but this: neither doth herein my zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity, as rather to hate than pity Turks, Infidels, and (what is worse) Jews; rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style, than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

Quousque patiere, bone Jesu!
Judæi te semel, ego sæpius crucifixi;
Illi in Asia, ego in Britannia,
Gallia, Germania;
Bone Jesu, miserere mei, et Judæorum.

II

BUT, because the name of a Christian is become too general to express our faith,—there being a geography of religion as well as lands, and every clime not only distinguished by its laws and limits, but circumscribed by its doctrines and rules of faith,—to be particular, I am of that reformed new-cast religion, wherein I dislike nothing but the name; of the same belief our Saviour taught, the apostles disseminated, the fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed; but, by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty, that it required the careful and charitable hands of these times to restore it to its primitive integrity. Now, the accidental occasion whereupon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person by whom, so good a work was set on foot, which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn fill me with wonder and are the very same objections the insolent pagans first cast at Christ and His disciples.

III

YET I have not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom, than bring her in to be new trimmed in the dock,—who had rather promiscuously retain all, than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are, than what they have been,—as to stand in diameter and sword's point with them. We have reformed from them, not against them: for, omitting those improperations and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our affections, and not our cause, there is between us one common name and appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both; and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers, or the place wherein we make them; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Creator anywhere, especially in places devoted to His service; where, if their devotions offend Him, mine may please him; if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it. Holy water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition: my common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigour, sometimes not without morosity; yet, at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote my invisible devotion I should violate my own arm rather than a church; nor willingly deface the name of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross, or crucifix, I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour. I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or contemn the miserable condition of friars; for, though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary bell[9] without an elevation, or think it a suf-

[9] A church-bell, that tolls every day at six and twelve of the clock; at the hearing whereof every one, in what place soever, either of house or street, betakes himself to his prayer, which is commonly directed to the Virgin.

ficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all,—that is, in silence and dumb contempt. Whilst, therefore, they directed their devotions to her, I offered mine to God; and rectified the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own. At a solemn procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter. There are, questionless, both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies, whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use; and which stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look asquint on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot consist in the narrow point and centre of virtue without a reel or stagger to the circumference.

IV

AS there were many reformers, so likewise many reformations; every country proceeding in a particular way and method, according as their national interest, together with their constitution and clime, inclined them: some angrily and with extremity; others calmly and with mediocrity, not rending, but easily dividing, the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation;—which, though peaceable spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may effect, yet that judgment that shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes,—their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion,—may, with the same hopes, expect a union in the poles of heaven.

V

BUT, to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle; there is no church whose every part so squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs, seem so consonant unto reason, and, as it were, framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief—the church of England; to whose faith I am a sworn subject, and therefore, in a double obligation, subscribe unto her articles, and endeavour to observe her constitutions: whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe, according to the rules of my private reason, or the humour and fashion of my devotion; neither believing this because Luther affirmed it, nor disproving that because Calvin hath disavouched it. I condemn not all things in the council of Trent, nor approve all in the synod of Dort. In brief, where the Scripture is silent, the church is my text; where that speaks, 'tis but my comment;

where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but from the dictates of my own reason. It is an unjust scandal of our adversaries, and a gross error in ourselves, to compute the nativity of our religion from Henry the Eighth; who, though he rejected the Pope, refused not the faith of Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and essayed in ages past, and it was conceived the state of Venice would have attempted in our days. It is as uncharitable a point in us to fall upon those popular scurrilities and opprobrious scoffs of the Bishop of Rome, to whom, as a temporal prince, we owe the duty of good language. I confess there is a cause of passion between us: by his sentence I stand excommunicated; heretic is the best language he affords me: yet can no ear witness I ever returned to him the name of antichrist, man of sin, or whore of Babylon. It is the method of charity to suffer without reaction: those usual satires and invectives of the pulpit may perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ears are opener to rhetoric than logic; yet do they, in no wise, confirm the faith of wiser believers, who know that a good cause needs not to be patroned by passion, but can sustain itself upon a temperate dispute.

VI

I COULD never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that from which, perhaps, within a few days, I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion: and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage. Where we desire to be informed, 'tis good to contest with men above ourselves; but, to confirm and establish our opinions, 'tis best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity; many, from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error and remain as trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender; 'tis therefore far better to enjoy her with peace than to hazard her on a battle. If, therefore, there rise any doubts in my way, I do forget them, or at least defer them, till my better settled judgment and more manly reason be able to resolve

them; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best Œdipus, and will upon a reasonable truce, find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the subtleties of error have enchained our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems double-faced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself: but in divinity I love to keep the road; and, though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move; not reserving any proper poles, or motion from the epicycle of my own brain. By this means I leave no gap for heresy, schisms, or errors, of which at present, I hope I shall not injure truth to say, I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three; not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For, indeed, heresies perish not with their authors; but, like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy: it may be cancelled for the present; but revolution of time, and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again. For, as though there were a metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find, after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again, we need not look for Plato's year:[9] every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogeneses, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been some one since, that parallels him, and is, as it were, his revived self.

VII

NOW, the first of mine was that of the Arabians; that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day: not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul, but if that were (which faith, not philosophy, hath yet thoroughly disproved), and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof that we all do of the body, that it should rise again. Surely it is but the merits of our unworthy natures, if we sleep in darkness until the last alarum. A serious

[9] A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate, and he be teaching again in his school, as when he delivered this opinion.

reflex upon my own unworthiness did make me backward from challenging this prerogative of my soul: so that I might enjoy my Saviour at the last, I could with patience be nothing almost unto eternity. The second was that of Origen; that God would not persist in his vengeance for ever, but, after a definite time of his wrath, would release the damned souls from torture; which error I fell into upon a serious contemplation of the great attribute of God, his mercy; and did a little cherish it in myself, because I found therein no malice, and a ready weight to sway me from the other extreme of despair, whereunto melancholy and contemplative natures are too easily disposed. A third there is, which I did never positively maintain or practise, but have often wished it had been consonant to truth, and not offensive to my religion; and that is, the prayer for the dead; whereunto I was inclined from some charitable inducements, whereby I could scarce contain my prayers for a friend at the ringing of a bell, or behold his corpse without an orison for his soul. 'Twas a good way, methought, to be remembered by posterity, and far more noble than a history. These opinions I never maintained with pertinacity, or endeavoured to inveigle any man's belief unto mine, nor so much as ever revealed, or disputed them with my dearest friends; by which means I neither propagated them in others, nor confirmed them in myself: but, suffering them to flame upon their own substance, without addition of new fuel, they went out insensibly of themselves; therefore these opinions, though condemned by lawful councils, were not heresies in me, but bare errors, and single lapses of my understanding, without a joint depravity of my will. Those have not only depraved understandings, but diseased affections, which cannot enjoy a singularity without a heresy, or be the author of an opinion without they be of a sect also. This was the villany of the first schism of Lucifer; who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions of spirits; and upon this experience he tempted only Eve, well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.

VIII

THAT heresies should arise, we have the prophecy of Christ; but, that old ones should be abolished, we hold no prediction. That there must be heresies, is true, not only in our church, but also in any other: even in the doctrines heretical there will be superheresies; and Arians, not only divided from the church, but

also among themselves: for heads that are disposed unto schism, and complexionally propense to innovation, are naturally indisposed for a community; nor will be ever confined unto the order or economy of one body; and therefore, when they separate from others, they knit but loosely among themselves; nor contented with a general breach or dichotomy with their church, do subdivide and mince themselves almost into atoms. 'Tis true, that men of singular parts and humours have not been free from singular opinions and conceits in all ages; retaining something, not only beside the opinion of their own church, or any other, but also any particular author; which, notwithstanding, a sober judgment may do without offence or heresy; for there are yet, after all the decrees of councils, and the niceties of the schools, many things, untouched, unimagined, wherein the liberty of an honest reason may play and expatiate with security, and far without the circle of a heresy.

IX

AS for those wingy mysteries in divinity, and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the pia mater of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith: the deepest mysteries ours contains have not only been illustrated, but maintained, by syllogism and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery; to pursue my reason to an O altitudo! 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity—incarnation and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian, Certum est quia impossibile est. I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point; for, to credit ordinary and visible objects, is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre; and, when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself, and am thankful, that I lived not in the days of miracles; that I never saw Christ nor His disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea; nor one of Christ's patients, on whom He wrought His wonders: then had my faith been thrust upon me; nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'Tis an easy and necessary belief, to credit what our eye and sense hath examined. I believe He was dead, and buried, and rose again; and desire to see Him in His glory, rather than to contemplate Him in His cenotaph or sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe;

as we have reason, we owe this faith unto history: they only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith, who lived before His coming, who, upon obscure prophecies and mystical types, could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

X

'TIS true, there is an edge in all firm belief, and with an easy metaphor we may say, the sword of faith; but in these obscurities I rather use it in the adjunct the apostle gives it, a buckler; under which I conceive a wary combatant may lie invulnerable. Since I was of understanding to know that we know nothing, my reason hath been more pliable to the will of faith: I am now content to understand a mystery, without a rigid definition, in an easy and Platonic description. That allegorical description of Hermes[9] pleaseth me beyond all the metaphysical definitions of divines. Where I cannot satisfy my reason, I love to humour my fancy: I had as lieve you tell me that anima est angelus hominis, est corpus Dei, as ἐντελέχεια;—lux est umbra Dei, as actus perspicui. Where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 'tis good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration; for, by acquainting our reason how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it becomes more humble and submissive unto the subtleties of faith: and thus I teach my haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith. I believe there was already a tree, whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though in the same chapter where God forbids it, 'tis positively said, the plants of the field were not yet grown; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. I believe that the serpent (if we shall literally understand it), from his proper form and figure, made his motion on his belly, before the curse. I find the trial of the pucelage and virginity of women, which God ordained the Jews, is very fallible. Experience and history informs me that, not only many particular women, but likewise whole nations, have escaped the curse of childbirth, which God seems to pronounce upon the whole sex; yet do I believe that all this is true, which indeed, my reason would persuade me to be false: and this, I think, is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to, reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

XI

IN my solitary and retired imagination (neque enim, cum porticus aut me lectulus accepit, desum mihi) I remember I am

[9] "Sphæra cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi."

not alone; and therefore forget not to contemplate Him and His attributes, who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, His wisdom and eternity. With the one I recreate, with the other I confound, my understanding: for who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstasy? Time we may comprehend; 'tis but five days older than ourselves, and hath the same horoscope with the world; but, to retire so far back as to apprehend a beginning,—to give such an infinite start forwards as to conceive an end,—in an essence that we affirm hath neither the one nor the other, it puts my reason to St. Paul's sanctuary: my philosophy dares not say the angels can do it. God hath not made a creature that can comprehend Him; 'tis a privilege of His own nature: "I am that I am" was His own definition unto Moses; and 'twas a short one to confound mortality, that durst question God, or ask Him what He was. Indeed, He only is; all others have and shall be; but, in eternity, there is no distinction of tenses; and therefore that terrible term, predestination, which hath troubled so many weak heads to conceive, and the wisest to explain, is in respect to God no prescious determination of our estates to come, but a definitive blast of His will already fulfilled, and at the instant that He first decreed it; for, to His eternity, which is indivisible, and altogether, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. St. Peter speaks modestly, when he saith, "a thousand years to God are but as one day"; for, to speak like a philosopher, those continued instances of time, which flow into a thousand years, make not to Him one moment. What to us is to come, to His eternity is present; His whole duration being but one permanent point, without succession, parts, flux, or division.

XII

THERE is no attribute that adds more difficulty to the mystery of the Trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. I wonder how Aristotle could conceive the world eternal, or how he could make good two eternities. His similitude, of a triangle comprehended in a square, doth somewhat illustrate the trinity of our souls and that the triple unity of God; for there is in us not three, but a trinity of, souls; because there is in us, if not three distinct souls, yet differing faculties, that can and do subsist apart in different subjects, and yet in us are thus united as to make but one soul and substance. If one soul were so perfect as to inform three distinct bodies, that were a petty trinity. Conceive the distinct number of three, not

divided nor separated by the intellect, but actually comprehended in its unity, and that is a perfect trinity. I have often admired the mystical way of Pythagoras, and the secret magick of numbers. "Beware of philosophy," is a precept not to be received in too large a sense: for, in this mass of nature, there is a set of things that carry in their front, though not in capital letters, yet in stenography and short characters, something of divinity; which, to wiser reasons, serve as luminaries in the abyss of knowledge, and, to judicious beliefs, as scales and rundles to mount the pinnacles and highest pieces of divinity. The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some real substance in that invisible fabrick.

XIII

THAT other attribute, wherewith I recreate my devotion, is His wisdom, in which I am happy; and for the contemplation of this only do not repent me that I was bred in the way of study. The advantage I have of the vulgar, with the content and happiness I conceive therein, is an ample recompense for all my endeavours, in what part of knowledge soever. Wisdom is His most beauteous attribute: no man can attain unto it: yet Solomon pleased God when he desired it. He is wise, because He knows all things; and He knoweth all things, because He made them all: but His greatest knowledge is in comprehending that He made not, that is, Himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man. For this do I honour my own profession, and embrace the counsel even of the devil himself: had he read such a lecture in Paradise as he did at Delphos,[a] we had better known ourselves; nor had we stood in fear to know him. I know God is wise in all; wonderful in what we conceive, but far more in what we comprehend not: for we behold Him but asquint, upon reflex or shadow; our understanding is dimmer than Moses' eye; we are ignorant of the back parts or lower side of His divinity; therefore, to pry into the maze of His counsels, is not wholly folly in man, but presumption even in angels. Like us, they are His servants, not His senators; He holds no council, but that mystical one of the Trinity, wherein, though there be three persons, there is but one mind that decrees without contradiction. Nor needs He any: His actions are not begot with deliberation; His wisdom naturally

[a] Γνῶθι σεαυτόν. Nosce teipsum.

knows what's best: His intellect stands ready fraught with the superlative and purest ideas of goodness: consultation and election, which are two motions in us, make but one in Him: His actions springing from His power at the first touch of His will. These are contemplations metaphysical: my humble speculations have another method, and are content to trace and discover those expressions He hath left in His creatures, and the obvious effects of nature. There is no danger to profound these mysteries, no sanctum sanctorum in philosophy. The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man: 'tis the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts. Without this, the world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honour from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire His works. Those highly magnify Him, whose judicious enquiry into His acts, and deliberate research into His creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration. Therefore,

Search while thou wilt; and let thy reason go,
To ransom truth, e'en to th' abyss below;
Rally the scattered causes; and that line
Which nature twists be able to untwine.
It is thy Maker's will; for unto none
But unto reason can He e'er be known.
The devils do know Thee; but those damn'd meteors
Build not Thy glory, but confound Thy creatures.
Teach me endeavours so Thy works to read,
That learning them in Thee I may proceed.
Give Thou my reason that instructive flight,
Whose weary wings may on Thy hands still light.
Teach me to soar aloft, yet ever so,
When near the sun, to stoop again below.
Thus shall my humble feathers safely hover,
And, though near earth, more than the heav'ns discover.
And then at last, when homeward I shall drive,
Rich with the spoils of nature, to my hive,
There will I sit, like that industrious fly,
Buzzing Thy praises; which shall never die
Till death abrupts them, and succeeding glory
Bid me go on in a more lasting story.

And this is almost all wherein an humble creature may endeavour

to requite, and some way to retribute unto his Creator: for, if not he that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of the Father, shall be saved, certainly our wills must be our performances, and our intents make out our actions; otherwise our pious labours shall find anxiety in our graves, and our best endeavours not hope, but fear, a resurrection.

XIV

THERE is but one first cause, and four second causes, of all things. Some are without efficient, as God; others without matter, as angels; some without form, as the first matter: but every essence, created or uncreated, hath its final cause, and some positive end both of its essence and operation. This is the cause I grope after in the works of nature; on this hangs the providence of God. To raise so beauteous a structure as the world and the creatures thereof was but His art; but their sundry and divided operations, with their predestinated ends, are from the treasury of His wisdom. In the causes, nature, and affections, of the eclipses of the sun and moon, there is most excellent speculation; but, to profound farther, and to contemplate a reason why His providence hath so disposed and ordered their motions in that vast circle, as to conjoin and obscure each other, is a sweeter piece of reason, and a diviner point of philosophy. Therefore, sometimes, and in some things, there appears to me as much divinity in Galen his books, "De Usu Partium," as in Suarez's Metaphysicks. Had Aristotle been as curious in the enquiry of this cause as he was of the other, he had not left behind him an imperfect piece of philosophy, but an absolute tract of divinity.

XV

NATURA nihil agit frustra, is the only indisputable axiom in philosophy. There are no grotesques in nature; not any thing framed to fill up empty Cantons, and unnecessary spaces. In the most imperfect creatures, and such as were not preserved in the ark, but, having their seeds and principles in the womb of nature, are every where, where the power of the sun is,—in these is the wisdom of His hand discovered. Out of this rank Solomon chose the object of his admiration; indeed, what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels; these, I confess, are the colossuses and majestick pieces of her hand; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematics; and the civility of these little

citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker. Who admires not Regio-Montanus his fly beyond his eagle; or wonders not more at the operation of two souls in those little bodies than but one in the trunk of a cedar? I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature which, without farther travel, I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us: there is all Africa and her prodigies in us. We are that bold and adventurous piece of nature, which he that studies wisely learns, in a compendium, what others labour at in a divided piece and endless volume.

XVI

THUS there are two books from whence I collect my divinity. Besides that written one of God, another of His servant, nature, that universal and publick manuscript, that lies expansed unto the eyes of all. Those that never saw Him in the one have discovered Him in the other: this was the scripture and theology of the heathens; the natural motion of the sun made them more admire Him than its supernatural station did the children of Israel. The ordinary effects of nature wrought more admiration in them than, in the other, all His miracles. Surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature; which I define not, with the schools, to be the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of His creatures, according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the nature of the sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve but by a faculty from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts; but, like an excellent artist, hath so contrived His work, that, with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, He may effect His obscurest designs. Thus He sweeteneth the water with a wood, preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of His mouth might have as easily created;—for God is like a skilful geometrician, who, when more easily, and with one stroke of his compass, he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle

or longer way, according to the constituted and forelaid principles of his art: yet this rule of His He doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with His prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question His power, and conclude He could not. And thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore, to ascribe His actions unto her is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honour of our writings. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind of species or creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logick we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly; they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms; and having passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all that He had made was good, that is, conformable to His will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and beauty. There is no deformity but in monstrosity; wherein, notwithstanding, there is a kind of beauty; nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabrick. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never any thing ugly or misshapen, but the chaos; wherein, notwithstanding, to speak strictly, there was no deformity, because no form; nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature; they being both the servants of His providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things are artificial; for nature is the art of God.

XVII

THIS is the ordinary and open way of His providence, which art and industry have in good part discovered; whose effects we may foretell without an oracle. To foreshow these is not prophecy, but prognostication. There is another way, full of meanders and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides: and that is a more particular and obscure method of His providence; directing the operations of individual and single essences: this we call fortune; that serpentine and crooked line, whereby He draws those actions His wisdom intends in a more unknown and secret way; this cryptic and involved method of His providence have I ever admired; nor can

I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes, or dangers, and hits of chance, with a bezo las manos to Fortune, or a bare gramercy to my good stars. Abraham might have thought the ram in the thicket came thither by accident: human reason would have said, that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharoah's daughter. What a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph! able to convert a stoick. Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches, which pass a while under the effects of chance: but at the last, well examined, prove the mere hand of God. 'Twas not dumb chance that, to discover the fougade, or powder plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of '88 the better for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonour, and the partiality of fortune; to wit, the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did not detract from the nation, when he said, he sent his armado to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds. Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason we may promise the victory to the superior: but when unexpected accidents slip in, and unthought-of occurrences intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we may behold the hand, but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the Grand Seignior proudly said, if they should trouble him, as they did the Spaniard, he would send his men with shovels and pickaxes, and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but the mercy of God, that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius; and to the will of His providence, that dispenseth His favour to each country in their preordinate season. All cannot be happy at once; for, because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, and must obey the swing of that wheel, not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates arise to their zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods. For the lives, not only of men, but of commonwealths and the whole world, run not upon a helix that still enlargeth; but on a circle, where, arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity, and fall under the horizon again.

XVIII

THESE must not therefore be named the effects of fortune but

in a relative way, and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God: for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way; nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superior cause. 'Tis not a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables; for, even in sortilegies and matters of greatest uncertainty, there is a settled and preordered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune. Because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects, we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that "fools only are fortunate;" or that insolent paradox, that "a wise man is out of the reach of fortune;" much less those opprobrious epithets of poets, —whore, bawd, and strumpet. 'Tis, I confess, the common fate of men of singular gifts of mind, to be destitute of those of fortune; which doth not any way deject the spirit of wiser judgments who thoroughly understand the justice of this proceeding; and, being enriched with higher donatives, cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition, to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, not to be content with the goods of mind, without a possession of those of body or fortune: and it is an error, worse than heresy, to adore these complimental and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness, wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy, the favours of fortune. Let providence provide for fools: 'tis not partiality, but equity, in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents. Those that are able of body and mind He leaves to their deserts; to those of weaker merits He imparts a larger portion; and pieces out the defect of one by the excess of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature for leaving us naked; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures; being provided with reason, that can supply them all. We need not labour, with so many arguments, to confute judicial astrology; for, if there be a truth therein, it doth not injure divinity. If to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty; under Jupiter to be wealthy; I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity unto such benevolous aspects. Those that hold, that all things are governed by fortune, had not erred, had they not persisted there. The Romans, that

erected a temple to Fortune, acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity; for, in a wise supputation, all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logick may conjoin a heaven and earth in one argument, and, with less than a sorites, resolve all things into God. For though we christen effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all; whose concourse, though it be general, yet doth it subdivide itself into the particular actions of every thing, and is that spirit, by which each singular essence not only subsists, but performs its operation.

XIX

THE bad construction and perverse comment on these pair of second causes, or visible hands of God, have perverted the devotion of many unto atheism; who, forgetting the honest advisoes of faith, have listened unto the conspiracy of passion and reason. I have therefore always endeavoured to compose those feuds and angry dissensions between affection, faith, and reason: for there is in our soul a kind of triumvirate, or triple government of three competitors, which distracts the peace of this our commonwealth not less than did that other the state of Rome.

As reason is a rebel unto faith, so passion unto reason. As the propositions of faith seem absurd unto reason, so the theorems of reason unto passion, and both unto reason; yet a moderate and peaceable discretion may so state and order the matter, that they may be all kings, and yet make but one monarchy: every one exercising his sovereignty and prerogative in a due time and place, according to the restraint and limit of circumstance. There are, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts, and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself; which I confess I conquered, not in a martial posture, but on my knees. For our endeavours are not only to combat with doubts, but always to dispute with the devil. The villany of that spirit takes a hint of infidelity from our studies: and, by demonstrating a neutrality in one way, makes us mistrust a miracle in another. Thus, having perused the Archidoxes, and read the secret sympathies of things, he would dissuade my belief from the miracle of the Brazen Serpent; make me conceit that image worked by sympathy, and was but an Egyptian trick, to cure their diseases without a miracle. Again, having seen some experiments of bitumen, and having read far more of naphtha, he

whispered to my curiosity the fire of the altar might be natural, and bade me mistrust a miracle in Elias, when he intrenched the altar round with water: for that inflammable substance yields not easily unto water, but flames in the arms of its antagonist. And thus would he inveigle my belief to think the combustion of Sodom might be natural, and that there was an asphaltick and bituminous nature in that lake before the fire of Gomorrah. I know that manna is now plentifully gathered in Calabria; and Josephus tells me, in his days it was as plentiful in Arabia. The devil therefore made the query, "where was then the miracle in the days of Moses?" The Israelites saw but that, in his time, which the natives of those countries behold in ours. Thus the devil played at chess with me, and, yielding a pawn, thought to gain a queen of me; taking advantage of my honest endeavours; and, whilst I laboured to raise the structure of my reason, he strove to undermine the edifice of my faith.

XX

NEITHER had these or any other ever such advantage of me, as to incline me to any point of infidelity or desperate positions of atheism; for I have been these many years of opinion there was never any. Those that held religion was the difference of man from beasts, have spoken probably, and proceed upon a principle as inductive as the other. That doctrine of Epicurus, that denied the providence of God, was no atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of His majesty, which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferior creatures. That fatal Necessity of the Stoicks is nothing but the immutable law of His will. Those that heretofore denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost have been condemned but as hereticks; and those that now deny our Saviour, though more than hereticks, are not so much as atheists: for, though they deny two persons in the Trinity, they hold, as we do, there is but one God.

That villain and secretary of hell, that composed that miscreant piece of the three impostors, though divided from all religions, and neither Jew, Turk, nor Christian, was not a positive atheist. I confess every country hath its Machiavel, every age its Lucian, whereof common heads must not hear, nor more advanced judgments too rashly venture on. It is the rhetorick of Satan; and may pervert a loose or prejudicate belief.

XXI

I CONFESS I have perused them all, and can discover nothing that may startle a discreet belief; yet are there heads carried off

with the wind and breath of such motives. I remember a doctor in physick, of Italy, who could not perfectly believe the immortality of the soul, because Galen seemed to make a doubt thereof. With another I was familiarly acquainted, in France, a divine, and a man of singular parts, that on the same point was so plunged and gravelled with three lines of Seneca, that all our antidotes, drawn from both Scripture and philosophy, could not expel the poison of his error. There are a set of heads that can credit the relations of mariners, yet question the testimonies of Saint Paul: and peremptorily maintain the traditions of Ælian or Pliny; yet, in histories of Scripture, raise queries and objections: believing no more than they can parallel in humane authors. I confess there are, in Scripture, stories that do exceed the fables of poets, and, to a captious reader, sound like Garagantua or Bevis. Search all the legends of times past, and the fabulous conceits of these present, and 'twill be hard to find one that deserves to carry the buckler unto Sampson; yet is all this of an easy possibility, if we conceive a divine concourse, or an influence but from the little finger of the Almighty. It is impossible that, either in the discourse of man or in the infallible voice of God, to the weakness of our apprehensions there should not appear irregularities, contradictions, and antinomies: myself could show a catalogue of doubts, never yet imagined nor questioned, as I know, which are not resolved at the first hearing; not fantastick queries or objections of air; for I cannot hear of atoms in divinity. I can read the history of the pigeon that was sent out of the ark, and returned no more, yet not question how she found out her mate that was left behind: that Lazarus was raised from the dead, yet not demand where, in the interim, his soul awaited; or raise a law-case, whether his heir might lawfully detain his inheritance bequeathed unto him by his death, and he, though restored to life, have no plea or title unto his former possessions. Whether Eve was framed out of the left side of Adam, I dispute not; because I stand not yet assured which is the right side of a man; or whether there be any such distinction in nature. That she was edified out of the rib of Adam, I believe; yet raise no question who shall arise with that rib at the resurrection. Whether Adam was an hermaphrodite, as the Rabbins contend upon the letter of the text; because it is contrary to reason, there should be an hermaphrodite before there was a woman, or a composition of two natures, before there was a second composed. Likewise, whether the world was created in autumn, summer, or the spring; because it was created in them all: for,

whatsoever sign the sun possesseth, those four seasons are actually existent. It is the nature of this luminary to distinguish the several seasons of the year; all which it makes at one time in the whole earth, and successive in any part thereof. There are a bundle of curiosities, not only in philosophy, but in divinity, proposed and discussed by men of most supposed abilities, which indeed are not worthy our vacant hours, much less our serious studies. Pieces only fit to be placed in Pantagruel's library, or bound up with Tartaretus, De Modo Cacandi.

XXII

THESE are niceties that become not those that peruse so serious a mystery. There are others more generally questioned, and called to the bar, yet, methinks, of an easy and possible truth.

'Tis ridiculous to put off or drown the general flood of Noah, in that particular inundation of Deucalion. That there was a deluge once seems not to me so great a miracle as that there is not one always. How all the kinds of creatures, not only in their own bulks, but with a competency of food and sustenance, might be preserved in one ark, and within the extent of three hundred cubits, to a reason that rightly examines it, will appear very feasible. There is another secret, not contained in the Scripture, which is more hard to comprehend, and put the honest Father to the refuge of a miracle; and that is, not only how the distinct pieces of the world, and divided islands, should be first planted by men, but inhabited by tigers, panthers, and bears. How America abounded with beasts of prey, and noxious animals, yet contained not in it that necessary creature, a horse, is very strange. By what passage those, not only birds, but dangerous and unwelcome beasts, came over. How there be creatures there, which are not found in this triple continent. All which must needs be strange unto us, that hold but one ark; and that the creatures began their progress from the mountains of Ararat. They who, to salve this, would make the deluge particular, proceed upon a principle that I can no way grant; not only upon the negative of Holy Scriptures, but of mine own reason, whereby I can make it probable that the world was as well peopled in the time of Noah as in ours; and fifteen hundred years, to people the world, as full a time for them as four thousand years since have been to us. There are other assertions and common tenets drawn from Scripture, and generally believed as Scripture, whereunto, notwithstanding, I would never betray the liberty of my reason. 'Tis a postulate to me, that Methusalem was the longest lived of all the children of Adam; and no man

will be able to prove it; when, from the process of the text, I can manifest it may be otherwise. That Judas perished by hanging himself, there is no certainty in Scripture: though, in one place, it seems to affirm it, and, by a doubtful word, hath given occasion to translate it; yet, in another place, in a more punctual description, it makes it improbable, and seems to overthrow it. That our fathers, after the flood, erected the tower of Babel, to preserve themselves against a second deluge, is generally opinioned and believed; yet is there another intention of theirs expressed in Scripture. Besides, it is improbable, from the circumstance of the place; that is, a plain in the land of Shinar. These are no points of faith; and therefore may admit a free dispute. There are yet others, and those familiarly concluded from the text, wherein (under favour) I see no consequence. The church of Rome confidently proves the opinion of tutelary angels, from that answer, when Peter knocked at the door, 'Tis not he, but his angel; that is, might some say, his messenger, or somebody from him; for so the original signifies; and is as likely to be the doubtful family's meaning. This exposition I once suggested to a young divine, that answered upon this point; to which I remember the Franciscan opponent replied no more, but, that it was a new, and no authentick interpretation.

XXIII

THESE are but the conclusions and fallible discourses of man upon the word of God; for such I do believe the Holy Scriptures; yet, were it of man, I could not choose but say, it was the most singular and superlative piece that hath been extant since the creation. Were I a pagan, I should not refrain the lecture of it; and cannot but commend the judgment of Ptolemy, that thought not his library complete without it. The Alcoran of the Turks (I speak without prejudice) is an ill-composed piece, containing in it vain and ridiculous errors in philosophy, impossibilities, fictions, and vanities beyond laughter, maintained by evident and open sophisms, the policy of ignorance, deposition of universities, and banishment of learning. This hath gotten foot by arms and violence: that, without a blow, hath disseminated itself through the whole earth. It is not unremarkable, what Philo first observed, that the law of Moses continued two thousand years without the least alteration; whereas, we see, the laws of other commonwealths do alter with occasions: and even those, that pretended their original from some divinity, to have vanished without trace or memory. I believe, besides Zoroaster, there were divers others

that writ before Moses; who, notwithstanding, have suffered the common fate of time. Men's works have an age, like themselves; and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and period to their duration. This only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the general flames, when all things shall confess their ashes.

XXIV

I HAVE heard some with deep sighs lament the lost lines of Cicero; others with as many groans deplore the combustion of the library of Alexandria: for my own part, I think there be too many in the world; and could with patience behold the urn and ashes of the Vatican, could I, with a few others, recover the perished leaves of Solomon. I would not omit a copy of Enoch's pillars, had they many nearer authors than Josephus, or did not relish somewhat of the fable. Some men have written more than others have spoken. Pineda quotes more authors, in one work,[a] than are necessary in a whole world. Of those three great inventions in Germany, there are two which are not without their incommodities, and 'tis disputable whether they exceed not their use and commodities. 'Tis not a melancholy utinam of my own, but the desire of better heads, that there were a general synod—not to unite the incompatible difference of religion, but, — for the benefit of learning, to reduce it, as it lay at first, in a few and solid authors; and to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of rhapsodies, begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgments of scholars, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers.

XXV

I CANNOT but wonder with what exception the Samaritans could confine their belief to the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. I am ashamed at the rabbinical interpretation of the Jews upon the Old Testament, as much as their defection from the New: and truly it is beyond wonder, how that contemptible and degenerate issue of Jacob, once so devoted to ethnick superstition, and so easily seduced to the idolatry of their neighbours, should now, in such an obstinate and peremptory belief, adhere unto their own doctrine, expect impossibilities, and in the face and eye of the church, persist without the least hope of conversion. This is a vice in them, that were a virtue in us: for obstinacy in a bad

[a] Pineda, in his "Monarchia Ecclesiastica," quotes one thousand and forty authors.

cause is but constancy in a good: and herein I must accuse those of my own religion; for there is not any of such a fugitive faith, such an unstable belief, as a Christian; none that do so often transform themselves, not unto several shapes of Christianity, and of the same species, but unto more unnatural and contrary forms of Jew and Mahometan, that, from the name of Saviour, can descend to the bare term of prophet: and, from an old belief that He is come, fall to a new expectation of His coming. It is the promise of Christ, to make us all one flock: but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion we hold a slender proportion. There are, I confess, some new additions; yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries; and those only drawn from the revolt of pagans; men but of negative impieties; and such as deny Christ, but because they never heard of Him. But the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mahometan against both; for the Turk, in the bulk he now stands, is beyond all hope of conversion: if he fall asunder, there may be conceived hopes; but not without strong improbabilities. The Jew is obstinate in all fortunes; the persecution of fifteen hundred years hath but confirmed them in their error. They have already endured whatsoever may be inflicted: and have suffered, in a bad cause, even to the condemnation of their enemies. Persecution is a bad and indirect way to plant religion. It hath been the unhappy method of angry devotions, not only to confirm honest religion, but wicked heresies and extravagant opinions. It was the first stone and basis of our faith. None can more justly boast of persecutions, and glory in the number and valour of martyrs. For, to speak properly, those are true and almost only examples of fortitude. Those that are fetched from the field, or drawn from the actions of the camp, are not ofttimes so truly precedents of valour as audacity, and, at the best, attain but to some bastard piece of fortitude. If we shall strictly examine the circumstances and requisites which Aristotle requires to true and perfect valour, we shall find the name only in his master, Alexander, and as little in that Roman worthy, Julius Cæsar; and if any, in that easy and active way, have done so nobly as to deserve that name, yet, in the passive and more terrible piece, these have surpassed, and in a more heroical way may claim, the honour of that title. 'Tis not in the power of every honest faith to proceed thus far, or pass to heaven through the flames. Every one hath it not in that full measure, nor in so audacious and resolute a temper, as to endure those terrible tests and trials; who,

notwithstanding, in a peaceable way, do truly adore their Saviour, and have, no doubt, a faith acceptable in the eyes of God.

XXVI

NOW, as all that die in the war are not termed soldiers, so neither can I properly term all those that suffer in matters of religion, martyrs. The council of Constance condemns John Huss for a heretick; the stories of his own party style him a martyr. He must needs offend the divinity of both, that says he was neither the one nor the other. There are many (questionless) canonized on earth, that shall never be saints in heaven; and have their names in histories and martyrologies, who, in the eyes of God, are not so perfect martyrs as was that wise heathen Socrates, that suffered on a fundamental point of religion,—the unity of God. I have often pitied the miserable bishop that suffered in the cause of antipodes; yet cannot choose but accuse him of as much madness, for exposing his living on such a trifle, as those of ignorance and folly, that condemned him. I think my conscience will not give me the lie, if I say there are not many extant, that, in a noble way, fear the face of death less than myself; yet, from the moral duty I owe to the commandment of God, and the natural respect that I tender unto the conservation of my essence and being, I would not perish upon a ceremony, politick points, or indifferency: nor is my belief of that untractable temper, as not to bow at their obstacles, or connive at matters wherein there are not manifest impieties. The leaven, therefore, and ferment of all, not only civil, but religious, actions, is wisdom; without which, to commit ourselves to the flames is homicide, and (I fear) but to pass through one fire into another.

XXVII

THAT miracles are ceased, I can neither prove nor absolutely deny, much less define the time and period of their cessation. That they survived Christ is manifest upon record of Scripture: that they outlived the apostles also, and were revived at the conversion of nations, many years after, we cannot deny, if we shall not question those writers whose testimonies we do not controvert in points that make for our own opinions: therefore, that may have some truth in it, that is reported by the Jesuits of their miracles in the Indies. I could wish it were true, or had any other testimony than their own pens. They may easily believe those miracles abroad, who daily conceive a greater at home—the transmutation of those visible elements into the body and blood of our Saviour;—for the conversion of water into wine, which He

wrought in Cana, or, what the devil would have had Him do in the wilderness, of stones into bread, compared to this, will scarce deserve the name of a miracle: though, indeed, to speak properly, there is not one miracle greater than another; they being the extraordinary effects of the hand of God, to which all things are of an equal facility; and to create the world as easy as one single creature. For this is also a miracle; not only to produce effects against or above nature, but before nature; and to create nature, as great a miracle as to contradict or transcend her. We do too narrowly define the power of God, restraining it to our capacities. I hold that God can do all things: how He should work contradictions, I do not understand, yet dare not, therefore, deny. I cannot see why the angel of God should question Esdras to recall the time past, if it were beyond his own power; or that God should pose mortality in that which He was not able to perform Himself. I will not say that God cannot, but He will not, perform many things, which we plainly affirm He cannot. This, I am sure, is the mannerliest proposition; wherein, notwithstanding, I hold no paradox: for, strictly, His power is the same with His will; and they both, with all the rest, do make but one God.

XXVIII.

THEREFORE, that miracles have been, I do believe; that they may yet be wrought by the living, I do not deny: but have no confidence in those which are fathered on the dead. And this hath ever made me suspect the efficacy of relicks, to examine the bones, question the habits and appurtenances of saints, and even of Christ Himself. I cannot conceive why the cross that Helena found, and whereon Christ Himself died, should have power to restore others unto life. I excuse not Constantine from a fall off his horse, or a mischief from his enemies, upon the wearing those nails on his bridle which our Saviour bore upon the cross in His hands. I compute among your piæ fraudes, nor many degrees before consecrated swords and roses, that which Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, returned the Genoese for their costs and pains in his wars; to wit; the ashes of John the Baptist. Those that hold the sanctity of their souls doth leave behind a tincture and sacred faculty on their bodies, speak naturally of miracles, and do not salve the doubt. Now, one reason I tender so little devotion unto relicks is, I think the slender and doubtful respect I have always held unto antiquities. For that, indeed, which I admire, is far before antiquity; that is, Eternity; and that is, God Himself; who, though He be styled the Ancient of Days, cannot receive the

adjunct of antiquity, who was before the world, and shall be after it, yet is not older than it: for, in His years there is no climacter: His duration is eternity; and far more venerable than antiquity.

XXIX

BUT, above all things, I wonder how the curiosity of wiser heads could pass that great and indisputable miracle, the cessation of oracles; and in what swoon their reasons lay, to content themselves, and sit down with such a far-fetched and ridiculous reason as Plutarch allegeth for it. The Jews, that can believe the supernatural solstice of the sun in the days of Joshua, have yet the impudence to deny the eclipse, which every pagan confessed, at his death; but for this, it is evident beyond all contradiction: the devil himself confessed it. Certainly it is not a warrantable curiosity, to examine the verity of Scripture by the concordance of human history; or seek to confirm the chronicle of Hester or Daniel by the authority of Megasthenes or Herodotus. I confess, I have had an unhappy curiosity this way, till I laughed myself out of it with a piece of Justin, where he delivers that the children of Israel, for being scabbed, were banished out of Egypt. And truly, since I have understood the occurrences of the world, and know in what counterfeiting shapes and deceitful visards times present represent on the stage things past, I do believe them little more than things to come. Some have been of my own opinion, and endeavoured to write the history of their own lives; wherein Moses hath outgone them all, and left not only the story of his life, but, as some will have it, of his death also.

XXX

IT is a riddle to me, how this story of oracles hath not wormed out of the world that doubtful conceit of spirits and witches; how so many learned heads should so far forget their metaphysicks, and destroy the ladder and scale of creatures, as to question the existence of spirits; for my part, I have ever believed, and do now know, that there are witches. They that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits: and are obliquely, and upon conscience, a sort, not of infidels, but atheists. Those that, to confute their incredulity, desire to see apparitions, shall, questionless, never behold any, nor have the power to be so much as witches. The devil hath made them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft; and to appear to them were but to convert them. Of all the delusions wherewith he deceives mortality,

there is not any that puzzleth me more than the legerdemain of changelings. I do not credit those transformations of reasonable creatures into beasts, or that the devil hath a power to transpeciate a man into a horse, who tempted Christ (as a trial of His divinity) to convert but stones into bread. I could believe that spirits use with man the act of carnality; and that in both sexes. I conceive they may assume, steal, or contrive a body, wherein there may be action enough to content decrepit lust, or passion to satisfy more active veneries; yet, in both, without a possibility of generation: and therefore that opinion, that Anti-christ should be born of the tribe of Dan, by conjunction with the devil, is ridiculous, and a conceit fitter for a Rabbin than a Christian. I hold that the devil doth really possess some men; the spirit of melancholy others; the spirit of delusion others: that, as the devil is concealed and denied by some, so God and good angels are pretended by others, whereof the late defection of the maid of Germany[a] hath left a pregnant example.

XXXI

AGAIN, I believe that all that use sorceries, incantations, and spells, are not witches, or, as we term them, magicians. I conceive there is a traditional magick, not learned immediately from the devil, but at second hand from his scholars, who, having once the secret betrayed, are able and do empirically practise without his advice; they both proceeding upon the principles of nature; where actives, aptly conjoined to disposed passives, will, under any master, produce their effects. Thus, I think, at first, a great part of philosophy was witchcraft; which, being afterward derived to one another, proved but philosophy, and was indeed no more than the honest effects of nature: what invented by us, is philosophy; learned from him, is magick. We do surely owe the discovery of many secrets to the discovery of good and bad angels. I could never pass that sentence of Paracelsus without an asterisk, or annotation: ascendens constellatum multa revelat quærentibus magnalia naturæ, i.e., opera Dei. I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelations of spirits; for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow-natures on earth; and therefore believe that those many prodigies and ominous prognosticks, which forerun the ruins of states, princes, and private persons, are the charitable premonitions of

[a] That lived, without meat, on the smell of a rose.

good angels, which more careless inquiries term but the effects of chance and nature.

XXXII

NOW, besides these particular and divided spirits, there may be (for aught I know) an universal and common spirit to the whole world. It was the opinion of Plato, and it is yet of the hermetical philosophers. If there be a common nature, that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all? However, I am sure there is a common spirit, that plays within us, yet makes no part of us; and that is, the spirit of God; the fire and scintillation of that noble and mighty essence, which is the life and radical heat of spirits, and those essences that know not the virtue of the sun; a fire quite contrary to the fire of hell. This is that gentle heat that brooded on the waters, and in six days hatched the world; this is that irradiation that dispels the mists of hell, the clouds of horror, fear, sorrow, despair; and preserves the region of the mind in serenity. Whosoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this spirit, (though I feel his pulse) I dare not say he lives; for truly without this, to me, there is no heat under the tropick; nor any light, though I dwelt in the body of the sun.

As when the labouring sun hath wrought his track
Up to the top of lofty Cancer's back,
The icy ocean cracks, the frozen pole
Thaws with the heat of the celestial coal;
So when Thy absent beams begin t' impart
Again a solstice on my frozen heart,
My winter 's o'er, my drooping spirits sing,
And every part revives into a spring.
But if Thy quickening beams awhile decline,
And with their light bless not this orb of mine,
A chilly frost surpriseth every member,
And in the midst of June I feel December.
Or how this earthly temper doth debase
The noble soul, in this her humble place!
Whose wingy nature ever doth aspire
To reach that place whence first it took its fire.
These flames I feel, which in my heart do dwell,
Are not Thy beams, but take their fire from hell.
O quench them all! and let Thy Light divine
Be as the sun to this poor orb of mine!

And to Thy sacred Spirit convert those fires,
Whose earthly fumes choke my devout aspires!

XXXIII

THEREFORE, for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons, have their tutelary and guardian angels. It is not a new opinion of the Church of Rome, but an old one of Pythagoras and Plato: there is no heresy in it: and if not manifestly defined in Scripture, yet it is an opinion of a good and wholesome use in the course and actions of a man's life; and would serve as an hypothesis to salve many doubts, whereof common philosophy affordeth no solution. Now, if you demand my opinion and metaphysicks of their natures, I confess them very shallow; most of them in a negative way, like that of God; or in a comparative, between ourselves and fellow-creatures: for there is in this universe a stair, or manifest scale, of creatures, rising not disorderly, or in confusion, but with a comely method and proportion. Between creatures of mere existence and things of life there is a large disproportion of nature: between plants and animals, or creatures of sense, a wider difference: between them and man, a far greater: and if the proportion hold on, between man and angels there should be yet a greater. We do not comprehend their natures, who retain the first definition of Porphyry;* and distinguish them from ourselves by immortality: for, before his fall, man also was immortal: yet must we needs affirm that he had a different essence from the angels. Having, therefore, no certain knowledge of their nature, 'tis no bad method of the schools, whatsoever perfection we find obscurely in our selves, in a more complete and absolute way to ascribe unto them. I believe they have an extemporary knowledge, and, upon the first motion of their reason, do what we cannot without study or deliberation: that they know things by their forms, and define, by specifical difference, what we describe by accidents and properties: and therefore probabilities to us may be demonstrations unto them: that they have knowledge not only of the specifical, but numerical, forms of individuals, and understand by what reserved difference each single hypostasis (besides relation to its species) becomes its numerical self: that, as the soul hath a power to move the body it informs, so there's a faculty to move any, though inform none: ours upon restraint of time, place, and dis-

* Essentiæ rationalis immortalis.

tance: but that invisible hand that conveyed Habakkuk to the lion's den, or Philip to Azotus, infringeth this rule, and hath a secret conveyance, wherewith mortality is not acquainted. If they have that intuitive knowledge, whereby, as in reflection, they behold the thoughts of one another, I cannot peremptorily deny but they know a great part of ours. They that, to refute the invocation of saints, have denied that they have any knowledge of our affairs below, have proceeded too far, and must pardon my opinion, till I can thoroughly answer that piece of Scripture, "At the conversion of a sinner, the angels in heaven rejoice." I cannot, with those in that great father, securely interpret the work of the first day, fiat lux, to the creation of angels; though I confess there is not any creature that hath so near a glimpse of their nature as light in the sun and elements: we style it a bare accident; but, where it subsists alone, 'tis a spiritual substance, and may be an angel: in brief, conceive light invisible, and that is a spirit.

XXXIV

THESE are certainly the magisterial and masterpieces of the Creator; the flower, or, as we may say, the best part of nothing; actually existing, what we are but in hopes, and probability. We are only that amphibious piece, between a corporeal and a spiritual essence; that middle form, that links those two together, and makes good the method of God and nature, that jumps not from extremes, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures. That we are the breath and similitude of God, it is indisputable, and upon record of Holy Scripture: but to call ourselves a microcosm, or little world, I thought it only a pleasant trope of rhetorick, till my near judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein. For, first we are a rude mass, and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being, not yet privileged with life, or preferred to sense or reason; next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits: running on, in one mysterious nature, those five kinds of existences, which comprehend the creatures, not only the world, but of the universe. Thus is man that great and true amphibium, whose nature is disposed to live, not only like other creatures in divers elements, but in divided and distinguished worlds; for though there be but one to sense, there are two to reason, the one visible, the other invisible; whereof Moses seems to have left description, and of the other so obscurely, that some parts thereof are yet in controversy. And truly, for the first chapters of Gene-

sis, I must confess a great deal of obscurity; though divines have, to the power of human reason, endeavoured to make all go in a literal meaning, yet those allegorical interpretations are also probable, and perhaps the mystical method of Moses, bred up in the hieroglyphical schools of the Egyptians.

XXXV

NOW for that immaterial world, methinks we need not wander so far as the first moveable; for, even in this material fabrick, the spirits walk as freely exempt from the affection of time, place, and motion, as beyond the extremest circumference. Do but extract from the corpulency of bodies, or resolve things beyond their first matter, and you discover the habitation of angels; which if I call the ubiquitary and omnipresent essence of God, I hope I shall not offend divinity: for, before the creation of the world, God was really all things. For the angels, He created no new world, or determinate mansion, and therefore they are everywhere where is His essence, and do live, at a distance even, in Himself. That God made all things for man, is in some sense true; yet, not so far as to subordinate the creation of those purer creatures unto ours; though, as ministering spirits, they do, and are willing to fulfil the will of God in these lower and sublunary affairs of man. God made all things for Himself; and it is impossible He should make them for any other end than His own glory: it is all He can receive, and all that is without Himself. For, honour being an external adjunct, and in the honourer rather than in the person honoured, it was necessary to make a creature, from whom He might receive this homage: and that is, in the other world, angels, in this, man; which when we neglect, we forget the very end of our creation, and may justly provoke God, not only to repent that He hath made the world, but that He hath sworn He would not destroy it. That there is but one world, is a conclusion of faith; Aristotle with all his philosophy hath not been able to prove it: and as weakly that the world was eternal; that dispute much troubled the pen of the ancient philosophers, but Moses decided that question, and all is salved with the new term of a creation,—that is, a production of something out of nothing. And what is that?—whatsoever is opposite to something; or, more exactly, that which is truly contrary unto God: for He only is; all others have an existence with dependency, and are something but by a distinction. And herein is divinity conformant unto philosophy, and not only generation founded on contrarieties, but also creation. God, being all things, is contrary unto

nothing; out of which were made all things, and so nothing became something, and omneity informed nullity into an essence.

XXXVI

THE whole creation is a mystery, and particularly that of man. At the blast of His mouth were the rest of the creatures made; and at His bare word they started out of nothing: but in the frame of man (as the text describes it) He played the sensible operator, and seemed not so much to create as make him. When He had separated the materials of other creatures, there consequently resulted a form and soul; but, having raised the walls of man, He was driven to a second and harder creation,—of a substance like Himself, an incorruptible and immortal soul. For these two affections we have the philosophy and opinion of the heathens, the flat affirmative of Plato, and not a negative from Aristotle. There is another scruple cast in by divinity concerning its production, much disputed in the German auditories, and with that indifferency and equality of arguments, as leave the controversy undetermined. I am not of Paracelsus's mind, that boldly delivers a receipt to make a man without conjunction; yet cannot but wonder at the multitude of heads that do deny traduction, having no other argument to confirm their belief than that rhetorical sentence and antimetathesis[9] of Augustine, creando infunditur, infundendo creatur. Either opinion will consist well enough with religion: yet I should rather incline to this, did not one objection haunt me, not wrung from speculations and subtleties, but from common sense and observation; not pick'd from the leaves of any author, but bred amongst the weeds and tares of my own brain. And this is a conclusion from the equivocal and monstrous productions in the copulation of a man with a beast: for if the soul of man be not transmitted and transfused in the seed of the parents, why are not those productions merely beasts, but have also an impression and tincture of reason in as high a measure, as it can evidence itself in those improper organs? Nor, truly, can I peremptorily deny that the soul, in this her sublunary estate, is wholly, and in all acceptions, inorganical: but that, for the performance of her ordinary actions, there is required not only a symmetry and proper disposition of organs, but a crasis and temper correspondent to its operations; yet is not this mass of flesh and visible structure the instrument and proper

[9] Antanaclasis.—A figure in rhetoric, where one word is inserted upon another.

corpse of the soul, but rather of sense, and that the hand of reason. In our study of anatomy there is a mass of mysterious philosophy, and such as reduced the very heathens to divinity; yet, amongst all those rare discoveries and curious pieces I find in the fabrick of man, I do not so much content myself, as in that I find not,—that is, no organ or instrument for the rational soul; for in the brain, which we term the seat of reason, there is not anything of moment more than I can discover in the crany of a beast: and this is a sensible and no inconsiderable argument of the inorganity of the soul, at least in that sense we usually so receive it. Thus we are men, and we know not how; there is something in us that can be without us, and will be after us, though it is strange that it hath no history what it was before us, nor cannot tell how it entered in us.

XXXVII

NOW, for these walls of flesh, wherein the soul doth seem to be immured before the resurrection, it is nothing but an elemental composition, and a fabrick that must fall to ashes. "All flesh is grass," is not only metaphorically, but literally, true; for all those creatures we behold are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves. Nay, further, we are what we all abhor, anthropophagi, and cannibals, devourers not only of men, but of ourselves; and that not in an allegory but a positive truth: for all this mass of flesh which we behold, came in at our mouths: this frame we look upon, hath been our trenchers; in brief, we have devoured ourselves. I cannot believe the wisdom of Pythagoras did ever positively, and in a literal sense, affirm his metempsychosis, or impossible transmigration of the souls of men into beasts. Of all metamorphoses or transmigrations, I believe only one, that is of Lot's wife; for that of Nabuchodonosor proceeded not so far. In all others I conceive there is no further verity than is contained in their implicit sense and morality. I believe that the whole frame of a beast doth perish, and is left in the same state after death as before it was materialed unto life: that the souls of men know neither contrary nor corruption; that they subsist beyond the body, and outlive death by the privilege of their proper natures, and without a miracle: that the souls of the faithful, as they leave earth, take possession of heaven; that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villany; instilling and stealing into our

hearts that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander, solicitous of the affairs of the world. But that those phantasms appear often, and do frequent cemeteries, charnel-houses, and churches, it is because those are the dormitories of the dead, where the devil, like an insolent champion, beholds with pride the spoils and trophies of his victory over Adam.

XXXVIII

THIS is that dismal conquest we all deplore, that makes us so often cry, O Adam, quid fecisti? I thank God I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life, or be convulsed and tremble at the name of death. Not that I am insensible of the dread and horror thereof; or, by raking into the bowels of the deceased, continual sight of anatomies, skeletons, or cadaverous relicks, like vespilloes, or gravemakers, I am become stupid, or have forgot the apprehension of mortality; but that, marshalling all the horrors, and contemplating the extremities thereof, I find not anything therein able to daunt the courage of a man, much less a well-resolved Christian; and therefore am not angry at the error of our first parents, or unwilling to bear a part of this common fate, and, like the best of them, to die; that is, to cease to breathe, to take a farewell of the elements; to be a kind of nothing for a moment; to be within one instant of a spirit. When I take a full view and circle of myself without this reasonable moderator, and equal piece of justice, death, I do conceive myself the miserablest person extant. Were there not another life that I hope for, all the vanities of this world should not entreat a moment's breath from me. Could the devil work my belief to imagine I could never die, I would not outlive that very thought. I have so abject a conceit of this common way of existence, this retaining to the sun and elements, I cannot think this is to be a man, or to live according to the dignity of humanity. In expectation of a better, I can with patience embrace this life; yet, in my best meditations, do often defy death. I honour any man that contemns it; nor can I highly love any that is afraid of it: this makes me naturally love a soldier, and honour those tattered and contemptible regiments, that will die at the command of a sergeant. For a pagan there may be some motives to be in love with life; but, for a Christian to be amazed at death, I see not how he can escape this dilemma--that he is too sensible of this life, or hopeless of the life to come.

XXXIX

SOME divines count Adam thirty years old at his creation, be-

cause they suppose him created in the perfect age and stature of man: and surely we are all out of the computation of our age; and every man is some months older than he bethinks him; for we live, move, have a being, and are subject to the actions of the elements, and the malice of diseases, in that other world, the truest microcosm, the womb of our mother; for besides that general and common existence we are conceived to hold in our chaos, and whilst we sleep within the bosom of our causes, we enjoy a being and life in three distinct worlds, wherein we receive most manifest gradations. In that obscure world, the womb of our mother, our time is short, computed by the moon; yet longer than the days of many creatures that behold the sun; ourselves being not yet without life, sense, and reason; though, for the manifestation of its actions, it awaits the opportunity of objects, and seems to live there but in its root and soul of vegetation. Entering afterwards upon the scene of the world, we rise up and become another creature; performing the reasonable actions of man, and obscurely manifesting that part of divinity in us, but not in complement and perfection, till we have once more cast our secundine, that is, this slough of flesh, and are delivered into the last world, that is, that ineffable place of Paul, that proper ubi of spirits. The smattering I have of the philosophers' stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold) hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief, how that immortal spirit and incorruptible substance of my soul may lie obscure, and sleep awhile within this house of flesh. Those strange and mystical transmigrations that I have observed in silkworms turned my philosophy into divinity. There is in these works of nature, which seem to puzzle reason, something divine; and hath more in it than the eye of a common spectator doth discover.

XL

I AM naturally bashful; nor hath conversation, age, or travel, been able to effront or enharden me; yet I have one part of modesty, which I have seldom discovered in another, that is (to speak truly), I am not so much afraid of death as ashamed thereof; 'tis the very disgrace and ignominy of our natures, that in a moment can so disfigure us, that our nearest friends, wife, and children, stand afraid, and start at us. The birds and beasts of the field, that before, in a natural fear, obeyed us, forgetting all allegiance, begin to prey upon us. This very conceit hath, in a tempest, disposed and left me willing to be swallowed up in the abyss of waters,

wherein I had perished unseen, unpitied, without wondering eyes, tears of pity, lectures of mortality, and none had said, Quantum mutatus ab illo! Not that I am ashamed of the anatomy of my parts, or can accuse nature of playing the bungler in any part of me, or my own vicious life for contracting any shameful disease upon me, whereby I might not call myself as wholesome a morsel for the worms as any.

XLI

SOME, upon the courage of a fruitful issue, wherein, as in the truest chronicle, they seem to outlive themselves, can with greater patience away with death. This conceit and counterfeit subsisting in our progenies seems to me a mere fallacy, unworthy the desires of a man, that can but conceive a thought of the next world; who, in a nobler ambition, should desire to live in his substance in heaven, rather than his name and shadow in the earth. And therefore, at my death, I mean to take a total adieu of the world, not caring for a monument, history, or epitaph; not so much as the bare memory of my name to be found anywhere, but in the universal register of God. I am not yet so cynical, as to approve the testament of Diogenes,[9] nor do I altogether allow that rodomontado of Lucan;

Cælo tegitur, qui non habet urnam.

He that unburied lies wants not his hearse;
For unto him a tomb 's the universe.

but commend, in my calmer judgment, those ingenuous intentions that desire to sleep by the urns of their fathers, and strive to go the neatest way unto corruption. I do not envy the temper of crows and daws, nor the numerous and weary days of our fathers before the flood. If there be any truth in astrology, I may outlive a jubilee; as yet I have not seen one revolution of Saturn,[99] nor hath my pulse beat thirty years, and yet, excepting one, have seen the ashes of, and left under ground, all the kings of Europe; have been contemporary to three emperors, four grand signiors, and as many popes: methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun; I have shaken hands with delight in my warm blood and canicular days; I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age; the world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but pantaloons and anticks, to my severer contemplations.

[9] Who willed his friend not to bury him, but to hang him up with a staff in his hand, to fright away the crows.

[99] The planet Saturn maketh his revolution once in 30 years.

XLII

IT is not, I confess, an unlawful prayer to desire to surpass the days of our Saviour, or wish to outlive that age wherein He thought fittest to die; yet, if (as divinity affirms) there shall be no grey hairs in heaven, but all shall rise in the perfect state of men, we do but outlive those perfections in this world, to be recalled unto them by a greater miracle in the next, and run on here but to be retrograde hereafter. Were there any hopes to outlive vice, or a point to be superannuated from sin, it were worthy our knees to implore the days of Methuselah. But age doth not rectify, but incurvate our natures, turning bad dispositions into worser habits, and (like diseases) brings on incurable vices; for every day, as we grow weaker in age, we grow stronger in sin, and the number of our days doth but make our sins innumerable. The same vice, committed at sixteen, is not the same, though it agrees in all other circumstances, at forty; but swells and doubles from the circumstance of our ages, wherein, besides the constant and inexcusable habit of transgressing, the maturity of our judgment cuts off pretence unto excuse or pardon. Every sin, the oftener it is committed, the more it acquireth in the quality of evil; as it succeeds in time, so it proceeds in degrees of badness; for as they proceed they ever multiply, and, like figures in arithmetick, the last stands for more than all that went before it. And, though I think no man can live well once, but he that could live twice, yet, for my own part, I would not live over my hours past, or begin again the thread of my days; not upon Cicero's ground, because I have lived them well, but for fear I should live them worse. I find my growing judgment daily instruct me how to be better, but my untamed affections and confirmed vitiosity make me daily do worse. I find in my confirmed age the same sins I discovered in my youth; I committed many then because I was a child; and, because I commit them still, I am yet an infant. Therefore I perceive a man may be twice a child, before the days of dotage; and stand in need of Æson's bath before threescore.

XLIII

AND truly there goes a deal of providence to produce a man's life unto threescore; there is more required than an able temper for those years: though the radical humour contain in it sufficient oil for seventy, yet I perceive in some it gives no light past thirty: men assign not all the causes of long life, that write whole books thereof. They that found themselves on the radical balsam, or vital sulphur of the parts, determine not why Abel lived not so

long as Adam. There is therefore a secret gloom or bottom of our days: 'twas his wisdom to determine them: but his perpetual and waking providence that fulfils and accomplisheth them; wherein the spirits, ourselves, and all the creatures of God, in a secret and disputed way, do execute his will. Let them not therefore complain of immaturity that die about thirty: they fall but like the whole world, whose solid and well-composed substance must not expect the duration and period of its constitution: when all things are completed in it, its age is accomplished; and the last and general fever may as naturally destroy it before six thousand, as me before forty. There is therefore some other hand that twines the thread of life than that of nature: we are not only ignorant in antipathies and occult qualities; our ends are as obscure as our beginnings; the line of our days is drawn by night, and the various effects therein by a pencil that is invisible; wherein, though we confess our ignorance, I am sure we do not err if we say, it is the hand of God.

XLIV

I AM much taken with two verses of Lucan, since I have been able not only, as we do at school, to construe, but understand:

Victurosque Dei celant, ut vivere durent,
Felix esse mori.

We're all deluded, vainly searching ways
To make us happy by the length of days;
For cunningly, to make 's protract this breath,
The gods conceal the happiness of death.

There be many excellent strains in that poet, wherewith his stoical genius hath liberally supplied him: and truly there are singular pieces in the philosophy of Zeno, and doctrine of the stoics, which I perceive, delivered in a pulpit, pass for current divinity: yet herein are they in extremes, that can allow a man to be his own assassin, and so highly extol the end and suicide of Cato. This is indeed not to fear death, but yet to be afraid of life. It is a brave act of valour to contemn death; but, where life is more terrible than death, it is then the truest valour to dare to live: and herein religion hath taught us a noble example; for all the valiant acts of Curtius, Scævola, or Codrus, do not parallel, or match, that one of Job; and sure there is no torture to the rack of a disease, nor any poniards in death itself, like those in the way or prologue unto it. Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihil curo; I would not die, but care not to be dead. Were I of Cæsar's religion, I should be of his desires, and wish rather to go off at one

blow, than to be sawed in pieces by the grating torture of a disease. Men that look no further than their outsides, think health an appurtenance unto life, and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick; but I, that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments that fabrick hangs, do wonder that we are not always so; and, considering the thousand doors that lead to death, do thank my God that we can die but once. 'Tis not only the mischief of diseases, and the villainy of poisons, that make an end of us; we vainly accuse the fury of guns, and the new inventions of death:—it is in the power of every hand to destroy us, and we are beholden unto every one we meet, he doth not kill us. There is therefore but one comfort left, that, though it be in the power of the weakest arm to take away life, it is not in the strongest to deprive us of death. God would not exempt Himself from that; the misery of immortality in the flesh He undertook not, that was in it, immortal. Certainly there is no happiness within this circle of flesh; nor is it in the opticks of these eyes to behold felicity. The first day of our jubilee is death; the devil hath therefore failed of his desires; we are happier with death than we should have been without it: there is no misery but in himself, where there is no end of misery; and so indeed, in his own sense, the stoic is in the right. He forgets that he can die, who complains of misery: we are in the power of no calamity while death is in our own.

XLV

NOW, besides this literal and positive kind of death, there are others whereof divines make mention, and those, I think, not merely metaphorical, as mortification, dying unto sin and the world. Therefore, I say, every man hath a double horoscope; one of his humanity,—his birth, another of his christianity,—his baptism: and from this do I compute or calculate my nativity; not reckoning those horæ combustæ, and odd days, or esteeming myself anything, before I was my Saviour's and enrolled in the register of Christ. Whosoever enjoys not this life, I count him but an apparition, though he wear about him the sensible affections of flesh. In these moral acceptions, the way to be immortal is to die daily; nor can I think I have the true theory of death, when I contemplate a skull or behold a skeleton with those vulgar imaginations it casts upon us. I have therefore enlarged that common memento mori into a more Christian memorandum, memento quatuor novissima,—those four inevitable points of us all, death, judgment, heaven, and hell. Neither did the contem-

plations of the heathens rest in their graves, without a further thought, of Rhadamanth or some judicial proceeding after death, though in another way, and upon suggestion of their natural reasons. I cannot but marvel from what sibyl or oracle they stole the prophecy of the world's destruction by fire, or whence Lucan learned to say,

Communis mundo superest rogus, ossibus astra
Misturus——

There yet remains to th' world one common fire,
Wherein our bones with stars shall make one pyre.

I believe the world grows near its end; yet is neither old nor decayed, nor shall ever perish upon the ruins of its own principles. As the work of creation was above nature, so is its adversary, annihilation; without which the world hath not its end, but its mutation. Now, what force should be able to consume it thus far, without the breath of God, which is the truest consuming flame, my philosophy cannot inform me. Some believe there went not a minute to the world's creation, nor shall there go to its destruction; those six days, so punctually described, make not to them one moment, but rather seem to manifest the method and idea of that great work of the intellect of God than the manner how He proceeded in its operation. I cannot dream that there should be at the last day any such judicial proceeding, or calling to the bar, as indeed the Scripture seems to imply, and the literal commentators do conceive: for unspeakable mysteries in the Scriptures are often delivered in a vulgar and illustrative way, and, being written unto man, are delivered, not as they truly are, but as they may be understood; wherein, notwithstanding, the different interpretations according to different capacities may stand firm with our devotion, nor be any way prejudicial to each single edification.

XLVI

NOW, to determine the day and year of this inevitable time, is not only convincible and statute madness, but also manifest impiety. How shall we interpret Elias's six thousand years, or imagine the secret communicated to a Rabbi which God hath denied unto His angels? It had been an excellent quære to have posed the devil of Delphos, and must needs have forced him to some strange amphibology. It hath not only mocked the predictions of sundry astrologers in ages past, but the prophecies of many melancholy heads in these present; who, neither understanding reasonably things past nor present, pretend a knowledge

of things to come; heads ordained only to manifest the incredible effects of melancholy, and to fulfil old prophecies, rather than be the authors of new. "In those days there shall come wars and rumours of wars" to me seems no prophecy, but a constant truth in all times verified since it was pronounced. "There shall be signs in the moon and stars;" how comes He then like a thief in the night, when He gives an item of His coming? That common sign, drawn from the revelation of Antichrist, is as obscure as any; in our common compute he hath been come these many years; but, for my own part, to speak freely, I am half of opinion that Antichrist is the philosopher's stone in divinity, for the discovery and invention whereof, though there be prescribed rules, and probable inductions, yet hath hardly any man attained the perfect discovery thereof. That general opinion, that the world grows near its end, hath possessed all ages past as nearly as ours. I am afraid that the souls that now depart cannot escape that lingering expostulation of the saints under the altar, quousque, Domine? how long, O Lord? and groan in the expectation of the great jubilee.

XLVII

THIS is the day that must make good that great attribute of God, His justice; that must reconcile those unanswerable doubts that torment the wisest understandings; and reduce those seeming inequalities and respective distributions in this world, to an equality and recompensive justice in the next. This is that one day, that shall include and comprehend all that went before it; wherein, as in the last scene, all the actors must enter, to complete and make up the catastrophe of this great piece. This is the day whose memory hath, only, power to make us honest in the dark, and to be virtuous without a witness. Ipsa sui pretium virtus sibi, that virtue is her own reward, is but a cold principle, and not able to maintain our variable resolutions in a constant and settled way of goodness. I have practised that honest artifice of Seneca, and, in my retired and solitary imaginations to detain me from the foulness of vice, have fancied to myself the presence of my dear and worthiest friends, before whom I should lose my head rather than be vicious; yet herein I found that there was nought but moral honesty; and this was not to be virtuous for His sake who must reward us at the last, I have tried if I could reach that great resolution of his, to be honest without a thought of heaven or hell; and, indeed I found, upon a natural inclination, and inbred loyalty unto virtue, that I could serve her without a

livery, yet not in that resolved and venerable way, but that the frailty of my nature, upon an easy temptation, might be induced to forget her. The life, therefore, and spirit of all our actions is the resurrection, and a stable apprehension that our ashes shall enjoy the fruit of our pious endeavours; without this, all religion is a fallacy, and those impieties of Lucian, Euripides, and Julian, are no blasphemies, but subtile verities; and atheists have been the only philosophers.

XLVIII

HOW shall the dead arise, is no question of my faith; to believe only possibilities is not faith, but mere philosophy. Many things are true in divinity, which are neither inducible by reason nor confirmable by sense; and many things in philosophy confirmable by sense, yet not inducible by reason. Thus it is impossible, by any solid or demonstrative reasons, to persuade a man to believe the conversion of the needle to the north; though this be possible and true, and easy credible, upon a single experiment unto the sense. I believe that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite again; that our separated dust, after so many pilgrimages and transformations into the parts of minerals, plants, animals, elements, shall, at the voice of God, return into their primitive shapes, and join again to make up their primary and predestinate forms. As at the creation there was a separation of that confused mass into its species; so at the destruction thereof there shall be a separation into its distinct individuals. As, at the creation of the world, all the distinct species that we behold lay involved in one mass, till the fruitful voice of God separated this united multitude into its several species, so, at the last day, when those corrupted relicks shall be scattered in the wilderness of forms, and seem to have forgot their proper habits, God, by a powerful voice, shall command them back into their proper shapes, and call them out by their single individuals. Then shall appear the fertility of Adam, and the magick of that sperm that hath dilated into so many millions. I have often beheld, as a miracle, that artificial resurrection and revivification of mercury, how being mortified into a thousand shapes, it assumes again its own, and returns into its numerical self. Let us speak naturally, and like philosophers. The forms of alterable bodies in these sensible corruptions perish not; nor, as we imagine, wholly quit their mansions; but retire and contract themselves into their secret and unaccessible parts; where they may best protect themselves from the action of their antagonist. A plant or vegetable

consumed to ashes to a contemplative and school-philosopher seems utterly destroyed, and the form to have taken his leave for ever; but to a sensible artist the forms are not perished, but withdrawn into their incombustible part, where they lie secure from the action of that devouring element. This is made good by experience, which can from the ashes of a plant revive the plant, and from its cinders recall it into its stalk and leaves again. What the art of man can do in these inferior pieces, what blasphemy is it to affirm the finger of God cannot do in those more perfect and sensible structures? This is that mystical philosophy, from whence no true scholar becomes an atheist, but from the visible effects of nature grows up a real divine, and beholds not in a dream, as Ezekiel, but in an ocular and visible object, the types of his resurrection.

XLIX

NOW, the necessary mansions of our restored selves are those two contrary and incompatible places we call heaven and hell. To define them, or strictly to determine what and where these are, surpasseth my divinity. That elegant apostle, which seemed to have a glimpse of heaven, hath left but a negative description thereof; which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor can enter into the heart of man: he was translated out of himself to behold it; but, being returned into himself, could not express it. Saint John's description by emeralds, chrysolites, and precious stones, is too weak to express the material heaven we behold. Briefly, therefore, where the soul hath the full measure and complement of happiness; where the boundless appetite of that spirit remains completely satisfied that it can neither desire addition nor alteration; that, I think, is truly heaven: and this can only be in the enjoyment of that essence, whose infinite goodness is able to terminate the desires of itself, and the unsatiable wishes of ours. Wherever God will thus manifest Himself, there is heaven, though within the circle of this sensible world. Thus, the soul of man may be in heaven anywhere, even within the limits of his own proper body; and when it ceaseth to live in the body it may remain in its own soul, that is, its Creator. And thus we may say that Saint Paul, whether in the body or out of the body, was yet in heaven. To place it in the empyreal, or beyond the tenth sphere, is to forget the world's destruction; for when this sensible world shall be destroyed, all shall then be here as it is now there, an empyreal heaven, a quasi vacuity; when to ask where heaven is, is to demand where the presence of God

is, or where we have the glory of that happy vision. Moses, that was bred up in all the learning of the Egyptians, committed a gross absurdity in philosophy, when with these eyes of flesh he desired to see God, and petitioned his Maker, that is truth itself, to a contradiction. Those that imagine heaven and hell neighbours, and conceive a vicinity between those two extremes, upon consequence of the parable, where Dives discoursed with Lazarus, in Abraham's bosom, do too grossly conceive of those glorified creatures, whose eyes shall easily out-see the sun, and behold without perspective the extremest distances: for if there shall be, in our glorified eyes, the faculty of sight and reception of objects, I could think the visible species there to be in as unlimitable a way as now the intellectual. I grant that two bodies placed beyond the tenth sphere, or in a vacuity, according to Aristotle's philosophy, could not behold each other, because there wants a body or medium to hand and transport the visible rays of the object unto the sense; but when there shall be a general defect of either medium to convey, or light to prepare and dispose that medium, and yet a perfect vision, we must suspend the rules of our philosophy, and make all good by a more absolute piece of opticks.

L

I CANNOT tell how to say that fire is the essence of hell; I know not what to make of purgatory, or conceive a flame that can either prey upon, or purify the substance of a soul. Those flames of sulphur, mentioned in the scriptures, I take not to be understood of this present hell, but of that to come, where fire shall make up the complement of our tortures, and have a body or subject whereon to manifest its tyranny. Some who have had the honour to be textuary in divinity are of opinion it shall be the same specifical fire with ours. This is hard to conceive, yet can I make good how even that may prey upon our bodies, and yet not consume us: for in this material world, there are bodies that persist invincible in the powerfulest flames; and though, by the action of fire, they fall into ignition and liquation, yet will they never suffer a destruction. I would gladly know how Moses, with an actual fire, calcined or burnt the golden calf into powder: for that mystical metal of gold, whose solary and celestial nature I admire, exposed unto the violence of fire, grows only hot, and liquefies, but consumeth not; so when the consumable and volatile pieces of our bodies shall be refined into a more impregnable and fixed temper, like gold, though they suffer from

the action of flames, they shall never perish, but lie immortal in the arms of fire. And surely, if this frame must suffer only by the action of this element, there will many bodies escape; and not only heaven, but earth will not be at an end, but rather a beginning. For at present it is not earth, but a composition of fire, water, earth, and air; but at that time, spoiled of these ingredients, it shall appear in a substance more like itself, its ashes. Philosophers that opinioned the world's destruction by fire, did never dream of annihilation, which is beyond the power of sublunary causes; for the last and proper action of that element is but vitrification, or a reduction of a body into glass; and therefore some of our chymicks facetiously affirm, that, at the last fire, all shall be crystalized and reverberated into glass, which is the utmost action of that element. Nor need we fear this term, annihilation, or wonder that God will destroy the works of his creation: for man subsisting, who is, and will then truly appear, a microcosm, the world cannot be said to be destroyed. For the eyes of God, and perhaps also of our glorified selves, shall as really behold and contemplate the world, in its epitome or contracted essence, as now it doth at large and in its dilated substance. In the seed of a plant, to the eyes of God, and to the understanding of man, though in an invisible way, there exist the perfect leaves, flowers, and fruit thereof; for things that are in posse to the sense, are actually existent to the understanding. Thus God beholds all things, who contemplates as fully His works in their epitome as in their full volume, and beheld as amply the whole world, in that little compendium of the sixth day, as in the scattered and dilated pieces of those five before.

LI

MEN commonly set forth the torments of hell by fire, and the extremity of corporal afflictions, and describe hell in the same method that Mahomet doth heaven. This indeed makes a noise, and drums in popular ears: but if this be the terrible piece thereof, it is not worthy to stand in diameter with heaven, whose happiness consists in that part that is best able to comprehend it, that immortal essence, that translated divinity and colony of God, the soul. Surely, though we place hell under earth, the devil's walk and purlieu is about it. Men speak too popularly who place it in those flaming mountains, which to grosser apprehensions represent hell. The heart of man is the place the devils dwell in; I feel sometimes a hell within myself; Lucifer keeps his court in my breast; Legion is revived in me. There are as many hells as

Anaxagoras conceited worlds. There was more than one hell in Magdalene, when there were seven devils; for every devil is an hell unto himself; he holds enough of torture in his own ubi; and needs not the misery of circumference to afflict him: and thus, a distracted conscience here is a shadow or introduction unto hell hereafter. Who can but pity the merciful intention of those hands that do destroy themselves? The devil, were it in his power, would do the like; which being impossible, his miseries are endless, and he suffers most in that attribute wherein he is impassible, his immortality.

LII

I THANK God, and with joy I mention it, I was never afraid of hell, nor ever grew pale at the description of that place. I have so fixed my contemplations on heaven, that I have almost forgot the idea of hell; and am afraid rather to lose the joys of the one, than endure the misery of the other: to be deprived of them is a perfect hell, and needs methinks no addition to complete our afflictions. That terrible term hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof. I fear God, yet am not afraid of Him; His mercies make me ashamed of my sins, before His judgments afraid thereof: these are the forced and secondary method of His wisdom, which He useth but as the last remedy, and upon provocation;—a course rather to deter the wicked, than incite the virtuous to His worship. I can hardly think there was ever any scared into heaven: they go the fairest way to heaven that would serve God without a hell: other mercenaries, that crouch unto Him in fear of hell, though they term themselves the servants, are indeed but the slaves, of the Almighty.

LIII

AND to be true, and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself. And, whether out of the prejudice of my affection, or an inverting and partial conceit of His mercies, I know not,—but those which others term crosses, afflictions, judgments, misfortunes, to me, who inquire further into them than their visible effects, they both appear, and in event have ever proved, the secret and dissembled favours of His affection. It is a singular piece of wisdom to apprehend truly, and without passion, the works of God, and so well to distinguish His justice from His mercy as not to miscall those noble attributes;

yet it is likewise an honest piece of logick so to dispute and argue the proceedings of God as to distinguish even His judgments into mercies. For God is merciful unto all, because better to the worst than the best deserve; and to say He punisheth none in this world, though it be a paradox, is no absurdity. To one that hath committed murder, if the judge should only ordain a fine, it were a madness to call this a punishment, and to repine at the sentence, rather than admire the clemency of the judge. Thus, our offences being mortal, and deserving not only death but damnation, if the goodness of God be content to traverse and pass them over with a loss, misfortune, or disease; what frenzy were it to term this a punishment, rather than an extremity of mercy, and to groan under the rod of His judgments rather than admire the sceptre of His mercies! Therefore to adore, honour, and admire Him, is a debt of gratitude due from the obligation of our nature, states, and conditions: and with these thoughts He that knows them best will not deny that I adore Him. That I obtain heaven, and the bliss thereof, is accidental, and not the intended work of my devotion; it being a felicity I can neither think to deserve nor scarce in modesty to expect. For these two ends of us all, either as rewards or punishments, are mercifully ordained and disproportionably disposed unto our actions; the one being so far beyond our deserts, the other so infinitely below our demerits.

LIV

THERE is no salvation to those that believe not in Christ; that is, say some, since His nativity, and, as divinity affirmeth, before also; which makes me much apprehend the end of those honest worthies and philosophers which died before His incarnation. It is hard to place those souls in hell, whose worthy lives do teach us virtue on earth. Methinks, among those many sub-divisions of hell, there might have been one limbo left for these. What a strange vision will it be to see their poetical fictions converted into verities, and their imagined and fancied furies into real devils! How strange to them will sound the history of Adam, when they shall suffer for him they never heard of! When they that derive their genealogy from the gods, shall know they are the unhappy issue of sinful man! It is an insolent part of reason, to controvert the works of God, or question the justice of His proceedings. Could humility teach others, as it hath instructed me, to contemplate the infinite and incomprehensible distance betwixt the Creator and the creature; or did we seriously

perpend that one simile of St. Paul, "shall the vessel say to the potter, why hast thou made me thus?" it would prevent these arrogant disputes of reason: nor would we argue the definitive sentence of God, either to heaven or hell. Men that live according to the right rule and law of reason, live but in their own kind, as beasts do in theirs; who justly obey the prescript of their natures, and therefore cannot reasonably demand a reward of their actions, as only obeying the natural dictates of their reason. It will, therefore, and must, at last appear, that all salvation is through Christ; which verify, I fear, these great examples of virtue must confirm, and make it good how the perfectest actions of earth have no title or claim unto heaven.

LV

NOR truly do I think the lives of these, or of any other, were ever correspondent, or in all points conformable, unto their doctrines. It is evident that Aristotle transgressed the rule of his own ethicks; the stoicks, that condemn passion, and command a man to laugh in Phalaris his bull, could not endure without a groan a fit of the stone or colick. The scepticks, that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confute themselves, and thought they knew more than all the world beside. Diogenes I hold to be the most vainglorious man of his time, and more ambitious in refusing all honours, than Alexander in rejecting none. Vice and the devil put a fallacy upon our reasons; and, provoking us too hastily to run from it, entangle and profound us deeper in it. The duke of Venice, that weds himself unto the sea, by a ring of gold, I will not accuse of prodigality, because it is a solemnity of good use and consequence in the state: but the philosopher, that threw his money into the sea to avoid avarice, was a notorious prodigal. There is no road or ready way to virtue; it is not an easy point of art to disentangle ourselves from this riddle or web of sin. To perfect virtue, as to religion, there is required a panoplia, or complete armour; that whilst we lie at close ward against one vice, we lie not open to the veney of another. And indeed wiser discretions, that have the thread of reason to conduct them, offend without pardon; whereas under heads may stumble without dishonour. There go so many circumstances to piece up one good action, that it is a lesson to be good, and we are forced to be virtuous by the book. Again, the practice of men holds not an equal pace, yea and often runs counter to their theory; we naturally know what is good, but naturally pursue what is evil: the rhetorick wherewith I persuade another cannot persuade myself. There

is a depraved appetite in us, that will with patience hear the learned instructions of reason, but yet perform no further than agrees to its own irregular humour. In brief, we all are monsters; that is, a composition of man and beast: wherein we must endeavour, to be as the poets fancy that wise man, Chiron; that is, to have the region of man above that of beast, and sense to sit but at the feet of reason. Lastly, I do desire with God that all, but yet affirm with men that few, shall know salvation—that the bridge is narrow, the passage strait unto life: yet those who do confine the church of God either to particular nations, churches, or families, have made it far narrower than our Saviour ever meant it.

LVI

THE vulgarity of those judgments that wrap the church of God in Strabo's cloak, and restrain it unto Europe, seem to me as bad geographers as Alexander, who thought he had conquered all the world, when he had not subdued the half of any part thereof. For we cannot deny the church of God both in Asia and Africa, if we do not forget the peregrinations of the apostles, the deaths of the martyrs, the sessions of many and (even in our reformed judgment) lawful councils, held in those parts in the minority and nonage of ours. Nor must a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than, perhaps, in the judgment of God, excommunicate from heaven one another; much less those Christians who are in a manner all martyrs, maintaining their faith in the noble way of persecution, and serving God in the fire, whereas we honour Him but in the sunshine.

'Tis true, we all hold there is a number of elect, and many to be saved; yet, take our opinions together, and from the confusion thereof, there will be no such thing as salvation, nor shall any one be saved: for, first, the church of Rome condemneth us; we likewise them; the sub-reformists and sectaries sentence the doctrine of our church as damnable; the atomist, or familist, reprobates all these; and all these, them again. Thus, whilst the mercies of God do promise us heaven, our conceits and opinions exclude us from that place. There must be therefore more than one St. Peter; particular churches and sects usurp the gates of heaven, and turn the key against each other; and thus we go to heaven against each other's wills, conceits, and opinions, and, with as much uncharity as ignorance, do err, I fear, in points not only of our own, but one another's salvation.

LVII

I BELIEVE many are saved who to man seem reprobated, and many are reprobated who in the opinion and sentence of man stand elected. There will appear, at the last day, strange and unexpected examples, both of His justice and His mercy; and, therefore, to define either is folly in man, and insolency even in the devils. Those acute and subtile spirits, in all their sagacity, can hardly divine who shall be saved; which if they could prognostick, their labour were at an end, nor need they compass the earth, seeking whom they may devour. Those who, upon a rigid application of the law, sentence Solomon unto damnation, condemn not only him, but themselves, and the whole world; for by the letter and written word of God, we are without exception in the state of death: but there is a prerogative of God, and an arbitrary pleasure above the letter of his own law, by which alone we can pretend unto salvation, and through which Solomon might be as easily saved as those who condemn him.

LVIII

THE number of those who pretend unto salvation, and those infinite swarms who think to pass through the eye of this needle, have much amazed me. That name and compellation of "little flock" doth not comfort, but deject, my devotion; especially when I reflect upon mine own unworthiness, wherein, according to my humble apprehensions, I am below them all. I believe there shall never be an anarchy in heaven; but, as there are hierarchies amongst the angels, so shall there be degrees of priority amongst the saints. Yet is it, I protest, beyond my ambition to aspire unto the first ranks; my desires only are, and I shall be happy therein, to be but the last man, and bring up the rear in heaven.

LIX

AGAIN, I am confident, and fully persuaded, yet dare not take my oath, of my salvation. I am, as it were, sure, and do believe without all doubt, that there is such a city as Constantinople; yet, for me to take my oath thereon were a kind of perjury, because I hold no infallible warrant from my own sense to confirm me in the certainty thereof. And truly, though many pretend to an absolute certainty of their salvation, yet, when an humble soul shall contemplate her own unworthiness, she shall meet with many doubts, and suddenly find how little we stand in need of the precept of St. Paul, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling." That which is the cause of my election, I hold to be

the cause of my salvation, which was the mercy and beneplacet of God, before I was, or the foundation of the world. "Before Abraham was, I am," is the saying of Christ, yet is it true in some sense if I say it of myself; for I was not only before myself but Adam, that is, in the idea of God, and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense, I say, the world was before the creation, and at an end before it had a beginning. And thus was I dead before I was alive; though my grave be England, my dying place was Paradise; and Eve miscarried of me, before she conceived of Cain.

LX

INSOLENT zeals, that do decry good works and rely only upon faith, take not away merit: for, depending upon the efficacy of their faith, they enforce the condition of God, and in a more sophistical way do seem to challenge heaven. It was decreed by God that only those that lapped in the water like dogs, should have the honour to destroy the Midianites; yet could none of those justly challenge, or imagine he deserved, that honour thereupon. I do not deny but that true faith, and such as God requires, is not only a mark or token, but also a means, of our salvation; but, where to find this, is as obscure to me as my last end. And if our Saviour could object, unto His own disciples and favourites, a faith that, to the quantity of a grain of mustard seed, is able to remove mountains; surely that which we boast of is not anything, or, at the most, but a remove from nothing.

This is the tenour of my belief; wherein, though there be many things singular, and to the humour of my irregular self, yet, if they square not with maturer judgments, I disclaim them, and do no further father them than the learned and best judgments shall authorize them.

PART THE SECOND

NOW, for that other virtue of charity, without which faith is a mere notion and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity. And, if I hold the true anatomy of myself, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue,—for I am of a constitution so general that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humour, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews

for locusts and grasshoppers; but, being amongst them, make them my common viands; and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a church-yard as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander; at the sight of a toad or viper, I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others: those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch; but, where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honour, love, and embrace them, in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate, but seem to be framed and constellated unto all. I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs, make unto me one country; I am in England everywhere, and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep, in a tempest. In brief I am averse from nothing: my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence, but the devil; or so at least abhor anything, but that we might come to composition. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do contemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude; that numerous piece of monstrosity, which, taken asunder, seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God, but, confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra. It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people: there is a rabble even amongst the gentry; a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as those; men in the same level with mechanicks, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But, as in casting account three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant Doradoes of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person, whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians; there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity, whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and pre-eminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times, and the

bias of present practice, wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well ordered polities: till corruption getteth ground; —ruder desires labouring after that which wiser considerations contemn;—every one having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a licence or faculty to do or purchase anything.

II

THIS general and indifferent temper of mine doth more nearly dispose me to this noble virtue. It is a happiness to be born and framed unto virtue, and to grow up from the seeds of nature, rather than the inoculations and forced grafts of education: yet, if we are directed only by our particular natures, and regulate our inclinations by no higher rule than that of our reasons, we are but moralists; divinity will still call us heathens. Therefore this great work of charity must have other motives, ends, and impulsions. I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God; I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but His that enjoined it; I relieve no man upon the rhetorick of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of pity doth not this so much for his sake as for his own: for by compassion we make other's misery our own; and so, by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. It is as erroneous a conceit to redress other men's misfortunes upon the common considerations of merciful natures, that it may be one day our own case; for this is a sinister and politick kind of charity, whereby we seem to bespeak the pities of men in the like occasions. And truly I have observed that those professed eleemosynaries, though in a crowd or multitude, do yet direct and place their petitions on a few and selected persons; there is surely a physiognomy, which those experienced and master mendicants observe, whereby they instantly discover a merciful aspect, and will single out a face, wherein they spy the signatures and marks of mercy. For there are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our souls, wherein he that cannot read A B C may read our natures. I hold, moreover, that there is a phytognomy, or physiognomy, not only of men, but of plants and vegetables; and in every one of them some outward figures which hang as signs or bushes of their inward forms. The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all His works, not graphical, or composed of letters, but of their several

forms, constitutions, parts, and operations, which, aptly joined together, do make one word that doth express their natures. By these letters God calls the stars by their names; and by this alphabet Adam assigned to every creature a name peculiar to its nature. Now, there are, besides these characters in our faces, certain mystical figures in our hands, which I dare not call mere dashes, strokes à la volée or at random, because delineated by a pencil that never works in vain; and hereof I take more particular notice, because I carry that in mine own hand which I could never read of nor discover in another. Aristotle, I confess, in his acute and singular book of physiognomy, hath made no mention of chiromancy: yet I believe the Egyptians, who were nearer addicted to those abstruse and mystical sciences, had a knowledge therein: to which those vagabond and counterfeit Egyptians did after pretend, and perhaps retained a few corrupted principles, which sometimes might verify their prognosticks.

It is the common wonder of all men, how, among so many millions of faces, there should be none alike: now, contrary, I wonder as much how there should be any. He that shall consider how many thousand several words have been carelessly and without study composed out of twenty-four letters; withal, how many hundred lines there are to be drawn in the fabrick of one man; shall easily find that this variety is necessary: and it will be very hard that they shall so concur as to make one portrait like another. Let a painter carelessly limn out a million of faces, and you shall find them all different; yea, let him have his copy before him, yet, after all his art, there will remain a sensible distinction: for the pattern or example of everything is the perfectest in that kind, whereof we still come short, though we transcend or go beyond it; because herein it is wide, and agrees not in all points unto its copy. Nor doth the similitude of creatures disparage the variety of nature, nor any way confound the works of God. For even in things alike there is diversity: and those that do seem to accord do manifestly disagree. And thus is man like God; for, in the same things that we resemble Him we are utterly different from Him. There was never anything so like another as in all points to concur; there will ever some reserved difference slip in, to prevent the identity; without which two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible.

III

BUT, to return from philosophy to charity, I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue as to conceive, that to give alms is only to

be charitable, or think a piece of liberality can comprehend the total of charity. Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us, in this narrow way, many paths unto goodness; as many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be charitable. There are infirmities not only of body, but of soul and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot contemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body than apparel the nakedness of his soul. It is an honourable object to see the reasons of other men wear our liveries, and their borrowed understandings do homage to the bounty of ours. It is the cheapest way of beneficence, and, like the natural charity of the sun, illuminates another without obscuring itself. To be reserved and caitiff in this part of goodness is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than the pecuniary avarice. To this (as calling myself a scholar) I am obliged by the duty of my condition. I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasury of knowledge. I intend no monopoly, but a community in learning. I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head than beget and propagate it in his. And, in the midst of all my endeavours, there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish with myself, nor can be legacied among my honoured friends. I cannot fall out with or condemn a man for an error, or conceive why a difference in opinion should divide an affection; for controversies, disputes, and argumentations, both in philosophy and in divinity, if they meet with discreet and peaceful natures, do not infringe the laws of charity. In all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much there is of nothing to the purpose; for then reason, like a bad hound, spends upon a false scent, and forsakes the question first started. And this is one reason why controversies are never determined; for, though they be amply proposed, they are scarce at all handled; they do so swell with unnecessary digressions; and the parenthesis on the party is often as large as the main discourse upon the subject. The foundations of religion are already established, and the principles of salvation subscribed unto by all. There remain not many controversies worthy a passion, and yet never any dispute it without, not only in divinity but inferior arts. What a

βατραχομυομαχία and hot skirmish is betwixt S. and T. in Lucian! How do grammarians hack and slash for the genitive case in Jupiter! How do they break their own pates, to salve that of Priscian! Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus. Yea, even amongst wiser militants, how many wounds have been given and credits slain, for the poor victory of an opinion, or beggarly conquest of a distinction! Scholars are men of peace, they bear no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actius his razor; their pens carry further, and give a louder report than thunder. I had rather stand in the shock of a basilisco than in the fury of a merciless pen. It is not mere zeal to learning, or devotion to the muses, that wiser princes patron the arts, and carry an indulgent aspect unto scholars; but a desire to have their names eternized by the memory of their writings, and a fear of the revengeful pen of succeeding ages: for these are the men that, when they have played their parts, and had their exits, must step out and give the moral of their scenes, and deliver unto posterity an inventory of their virtues and vices. And surely there goes a great deal of conscience to the compiling of an history: there is no reproach to the scandal of a story; it is such an authentick kind of falsehood, that with authority belies our good names to all nations and posterity.

IV

THERE is another offence unto charity, which no author hath ever written of, and few take notice of, and that's the reproach, not of whole professions, mysteries, and conditions, but of whole nations, wherein by opprobrious epithets we miscall each other, and, by an uncharitable logick, from a disposition in a few, conclude a habit in all.

Le mutin Anglois, et le bravache Escossois;
Le bougre Italien, et le fol François;
Le poltron Romain, le larron de Gascogne,
L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Alleman yvrogne.

St. Paul, that calls the Cretians liars, doth it but indirectly, and upon quotation of their own poet. It is as bloody a thought in one way as Nero's was in another. For by a word we wound a thousand, and at one blow assassin the honour of a nation. It is as complete a piece of madness to miscall and rave against the times; or think to recall men to reason by a fit of passion. Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply hypochondriack as Heraclitus, that bewailed them. It moves not my spleen to behold the multitude in their

proper humours; that is, in their fits of folly and madness, as well understanding that wisdom is not profaned unto the world; and it is the privilege of a few to be virtuous. They that endeavour to abolish vice destroy also virtue; for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another. Thus virtue (abolish vice) is an idea. Again, the community of sin doth not disparage goodness; for, when vice gains upon the major part, virtue, in whom it remains, becomes more excellent, and, being lost in some, multiplies its goodness in others, which remain untouched, and persist entire in the general inundation. I can therefore behold vice without a satire, content only with an admonition, or instructive reprehension; for noble natures, and such as are capable of goodness, are railed into vice, that might as easily be admonished into virtue; and we should be all so far the orators of goodness as to protect her from the power of vice, and maintain the cause of injured truth. No man can justly censure or condemn another; because, indeed, no man truly knows another. This I perceive in myself; for I am in the dark to all the world, and my nearest friends behold me but in a cloud. Those that know me but superficially think less of me than I do of myself; those of my near acquaintance think more; God who truly knows me, knows that I am nothing: for He only beholds me, and all the world, who looks not on us through a derived ray, or a trajection of a sensible species, but beholds the substance without the help of accidents, and the forms of things, as we their operations. Further, no man can judge another, because no man knows himself; for we censure others but as they disagree from that humour which we fancy laudable in ourselves, and commend others but for that wherein they seem to quadrate and consent with us. So that in conclusion, all is but that we all condemn, self-love. 'Tis the general complaint of these times, and perhaps of those past, that charity grows cold; which I perceive most verified in those which most do manifest the fires and flames of zeal; for it is a virtue that best agrees with coldest natures, and such as are complexioned for humility. But how shall we expect charity towards others, when we are uncharitable to ourselves? "Charity begins at home," is the voice of the world; yet is every man his greatest enemy, and as it were his own executioner. Non occides, is the commandment of God, yet scarce observed by any man; for I perceive every man is his own Atropos, and lends a hand to cut the thread of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first murderer, but Adam, who

brought in death; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel; and saw that verified in the experience of another which faith could not persuade him in the theory of himself.

V

THERE is, I think, no man that apprehendeth his own miseries less than myself; and no man that so nearly apprehends another's. I could lose an arm without a tear, and with few groans, methinks, be quartered into pieces; yet can I weep most seriously at a play, and receive with a true passion the counterfeit griefs of those known and professed impostures. It is a barbarous part of inhumanity to add unto any afflicted parties misery, or endeavour to multiply in any man a passion whose single nature is already above his patience. This was the greatest affliction of Job, and those oblique expostulations of his friends a deeper injury than the down-right blows of the devil. It is not the tears of our own eyes only, but of our friends also, that do exhaust the current of our sorrows; which, falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel. It is an act within the power of charity, to translate a passion out of one breast into another, and to divide a sorrow almost out of itself; for an affliction, like a dimension, may be so divided as, if not indivisible, at least to become insensible. Now with my friend I desire not to share or participate, but to engross, his sorrows; that, by making them mine own, I may more easily discuss them: for in mine own reason, and within myself, I can command that which I cannot entreat without myself, and within the circle of another. I have often thought those noble pairs and examples of friendship, not so truly histories of what had been, as fictions of what should be; but I now perceive nothing in them but possibilities, nor anything in the heroick examples of Damon and Pythias, Achilles, and Patroclus, which, methinks, upon some grounds, I could not perform within the narrow compass of myself. That a man should lay down his life for his friend seems strange to vulgar affections and such as confine themselves within that worldly principle, "charity begins at home." For mine own part, I could never remember the relations that I held unto myself, nor the respect that I owe unto my own nature, in the cause of God, my country, and my friends. Next to these three, I do embrace myself. I confess I do not observe that order that the schools ordain our affections,—to love our parents, wives, children, and then our friends; for, excepting the injunctions of re-

ligion, I do not find in myself such a necessary and indissoluble sympathy to all those of my blood. I hope I do not break the fifth commandment, if I conceive I may love my friend before the nearest of my blood, even those to whom I owe the principles of life. I never yet cast a true affection on a woman; but I have loved my friend, as I do virtue, my soul, my God. From hence, methinks, I do conceive how God loves man; what happiness there is in the love of God. Omitting all other, there are three most mystical unions; two natures in one person; three persons in one nature; one soul in two bodies. For though, indeed, they be really divided, yet are they so united, as they seem but one, and make rather a duality than two distinct souls.

VI

THERE are wonders in true affection. It is a body of enigmas, mysteries, and riddles; wherein two so become one as they both become two: I love my friend before myself, and yet, methinks, I do not love him enough. Some few months hence, my multiplied affection will make me believe I have not loved him at all. When I am from him, I am dead till I be with him. United souls are not satisfied with embraces, but desire to be truly each other; which being impossible, their desires are infinite, and must proceed without a possibility of satisfaction. Another misery there is in affection; that whom we truly love like our own selves, we forget their looks, nor can our memory retain the idea of their faces: and it is no wonder, for they are ourselves, and our affection makes their looks our own. This noble affection falls not on vulgar and common constitutions; but on such as are marked for virtue. He that can love his friend with this noble ardour will in a competent degree affect all. Now, if we can bring our affections to look beyond the body, and cast an eye upon the soul, we have found out the true object, not only of friendship, but charity: and the greatest happiness that we can bequeath the soul is that wherein we all do place our last felicity, salvation; which, though it be not in our power to bestow, it is in our charity and pious invocations to desire, if not procure and further. I cannot contentedly frame a prayer for myself in particular, without a catalogue for my friends; nor request a happiness wherein my sociable disposition doth not desire the fellowship of my neighbour. I never hear the toll of a passing bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit. I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul. I cannot see one say his prayers, but,

instead of imitating him, I fall into supplication for him, who perhaps is no more to me than a common nature: and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessing of mine unknown devotions. To pray for enemies, that is, for their salvation, is no harsh precept, but the practice of our daily and ordinary devotions. I cannot believe the story of the Italian; our bad wishes and uncharitable desires proceed no further than this life; it is the devil, and the uncharitable votes of hell, that desire our misery in the world to come.

VII

"TO do no injury nor take none" was a principle which, to my former years and impatient affections, seemed to contain enough of morality, but my more settled years, and Christian constitution, have fallen upon severer resolutions. I can hold there is no such thing as injury; that if there be, there is no such injury as revenge, and no such revenge as the contempt of an injury: that to hate another is to malign himself; that the truest way to love another is to despise ourselves. I were unjust unto mine own conscience if I should say I am at variance with anything like myself. I find there are many pieces in this one fabrick of man; this frame is raised upon a mass of antipathies: I am one methinks but as the world, wherein notwithstanding there are a swarm of distinct essences, and in them another world of contrarieties; we carry private and domestick enemies within, publick and more hostile adversaries without. The devil, that did but buffet St. Paul, plays methinks at sharp with me. Let me be nothing, if within the compass of myself, I do not find the battle of Lepanto, passion against reason, reason against faith, faith against the devil, and my conscience against all. There is another man within me that's angry with me, rebukes, commands, and dastards me. I have no conscience of marble, to resist the hammer of more heavy offences: nor yet so soft and waxen, as to take the impression of each single peccadillo or scape of infirmity. I am of a strange belief, that it is as easy to be forgiven some sins as to commit some others. For my original sin, I hold it to be washed away in my baptism; for my actual transgressions, I compute and reckon with God but from my last repentance, sacrament, or general absolution; and therefore am not terrified with the sins or madness of my youth. I thank the goodness of God, I have no sins that want a name. I am not singular in offences; my transgressions are epidemical, and from the common breath of our corruption. For there are

certain tempers of body which, matched with an humorous depravity of mind, do hatch and produce vitiosities, whose newness and monstrosity of nature admits no name; this was the temper of that lecher that carnaled with a statue, and the constitution of Nero in his spintrian recreations. For the heavens are not only fruitful in new and unheard of stars, the earth in plants and animals, but men's minds also in villany and vices. Now the dulness of my reason, and the vulgarity of my disposition, never prompted my invention nor solicited my affection unto any of these;—yet even those common and quotidian infirmities that so necessarily attend me, and do seem to be my very nature, have so dejected me, so broken the estimation that I should have otherwise of myself, that I repute myself the most abject piece of mortality. Divines prescribe a fit of sorrow to repentance: there goes indignation, anger, sorrow, hatred, into mine, passions of a contrary nature, which neither seem to suit with this action, nor my proper constitution. It is no breach of charity to ourselves to be at variance with our vices, nor to abhor that part of us which is an enemy to the ground of charity, our God; wherein we do but imitate our great selves, the world, whose divided antipathies and contrary faces do yet carry a charitable regard unto the whole, by their particular discords preserving the common harmony, and keeping in fetters those powers, whose rebellions, once masters, might be the ruin of all.

VIII

I THANK God, amongst those millions of vices, I do inherit and hold from Adam, I have escaped one, and that a mortal enemy to charity,—the first and father sin, not only of man, but of the devil, —pride; a vice whose name is comprehended in a monosyllable, but in its nature not circumscribed with a world, I have escaped it in a condition that can hardly avoid it. Those petty acquisitions and reputed perfections, that advance and elevate the conceits of other men, add no feathers unto mine. I have seen a grammarian tower and plume himself over a single line in Horace, and show more pride, in the construction of one ode, than the author in the composure of the whole book. For my own part, besides the jargon and patois of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages; yet I protest I have no higher conceit of myself than had our fathers before the confusion of Babel, when there was but one language in the world, and none to boast himself either linguist or critick. I have not only seen several countries, beheld the nature of their climes, the chorography of their pro-

vinces, topography of their cities, but understood their several laws, customs, and policies; yet cannot all this persuade the dulness of my spirit unto such an opinion of myself as I behold in nimbler and conceited heads, that never looked a degree beyond their nests. I know the names and somewhat more of all the constellations in my horizon; yet I have seen a prating mariner, that could only name the pointers and the north-star, out talk me, and conceit himself a whole sphere above me. I know most of the plants of my country, and of those about me, yet methinks I do not know so many as when I did but know a hundred, and had scarcely ever simpled further than Cheapside. For, indeed, heads of capacity, and such as are not full with a handful or easy measure of knowledge, think they know nothing till they know all; which being impossible, they fall upon the opinion of Socrates, and only know they know not any thing. I cannot think that Homer pined away upon the riddle of the fishermen, or that Aristotle, who understood the uncertainty of knowledge, and confessed so often the reason of man too weak for the works of nature, did ever drown himself upon the flux and reflux of Euripus. We do but learn, to-day, what our better advanced judgments will unteach tomorrow; and Aristotle doth but instruct us, as Plato did him, that is, to confute himself. I have run through all sorts, yet find no rest in any: though our first studies and junior endeavours may style us Peripateticks, Stoicks, or Academicks, yet I perceive the wisest heads prove, at last, almost all Scepticks, and stand like Janus in the field of knowledge. I have therefore one common and authentick philosophy I learned in the schools, whereby I discourse and satisfy the reason of other men; another more reserved, and drawn from experience, whereby I content mine own. Solomon, that complained of ignorance in the height of knowledge, hath not only humbled my conceits, but discouraged my endeavours. There is yet another conceit that hath sometimes made me shut my books, which tells me it is a vanity to waste our days in the blind pursuit of knowledge: it is but attending a little longer, and we shall enjoy that, by instinct and infusion, which we endeavour at here by labour and inquisition. It is better to sit down in a modest ignorance, and rest contented with the natural blessing of our own reasons, than buy the uncertain knowledge of this life with sweat and vexation, which death gives every fool gratis, and is an accessory of our glorification.

IX

I WAS never yet once, and commend their resolutions who

never marry twice. Not that I disallow of second marriage; as neither in all cases of polygamy, which considering some times, and the unequal number of both sexes, may be also necessary. The whole world was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman. Man is the whole world, and the breath of God; woman the rib and crooked piece of man. I could be content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to perpetuate the world without this trivial and vulgar way of coition: it is the foolishest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his cooled imagination, when he shall consider what an odd and unworthy piece of folly he hath committed. I speak not in prejudice, nor am averse from that sweet sex, but naturally amorous of all that is beautiful. I can look a whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of an horse. It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony; and sure there is musick, even in the beauty and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a musick wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion; and thus far we may maintain "the musick of the spheres:" for those well-ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whatsoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony, which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church-musick. For myself, not only from my obedience but my particular genius I do embrace it: for even that vulgar and tavern-musick, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the first composer. There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is a hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and creatures of God,—such a melody to the ear, as the whole world, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God. I will not say, with Plato, the soul is an harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto musick: thus some, whose temper of body agrees, and humours the constitution of their souls, are born poets, though indeed all are naturally inclined unto rhythm. This made Tacitus, in the very first line of his story, fall upon a verse; and Cicero, the worst of poets, but declaiming for a poet, falls in the very first sentence upon a perfect

hexameter. I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession; I do not secretly implore and wish for plagues, rejoice at famines, revolve ephemerides and almanacks in expectation of malignant aspects, fatal conjunctions, and eclipses. I rejoice not at unwholesome springs nor unseasonable winters: my prayer goes with the husbandman's; I desire everything in its proper season, that neither men nor the times be out of temper. Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me. I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own necessities. Where I do him no good, methinks it is scarce honest gain, though I confess 'tis but the worthy salary of our well intended endeavours. I am not only ashamed but heartily sorry, that, besides death, there are diseases incurable; yet not for my own sake or that they be beyond my art, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own. And, to speak more generally, those three noble professions which all civil commonwealths do honour, are raised upon the fall of Adam, and are not any way exempt from their infirmities. There are not only diseases incurable in physick, but cases indissolvable in law, vices incorrigible in divinity. If general councils may err, I do not see why particular courts should be infallible: their perfectest rules are raised upon the erroneous reasons of man, and the laws of one do but condemn the rules of another; as Aristotle ofttimes the opinions of his predecessors, because, though agreeable to reason, yet were they not consonant to his own rules and the logick of his proper principles. Again,—to speak nothing of the sin against the Holy Ghost, whose cure not only, but whose nature is unknown,—I can cure the gout or stone in some, sooner than divinity, pride, or avarice in others. I can cure vices by physick when they remain incurable by divinity, and they shall obey my pills when they contemn their precepts. I boast nothing, but plainly say, we all labour against our own cure; for death is the cure of all diseases. There is no catholicon or universal remedy I know, but this, which though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is nectar, and a pleasant potion of immortality.

X

FOR my conversation, it is, like the sun's, with all men, and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad; and the worst best, that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities, wherein they are good. There is no man's

mind of so discordant and jarring a temper, to which a tuneable disposition may not strike a harmony. Magnæ virtutes, nec minora vitia; it is the posy of the best natures, and may be inverted on the worst. There are, in the most depraved and venomous dispositions, certain pieces that remain untouched, which by an antiperistasis become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the contagion of their enemies' vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption. For it is also thus in nature: the greatest balsams do lie enveloped in the bodies of the most powerful corrosives. I say moreover, and I ground upon experience, that poisons contain within themselves their own antidotes, and that which preserves them from the venom of themselves; without which they were not deleterious to others only, but to themselves also. But it is the corruption that I fear within me; not the contagion of commerce without me. 'Tis that unruly regiment within me, that will destroy me; 'tis I that do infect myself; the man without a navel yet lives in me. I feel that original canker corrode and devour me: and therefore, Defenda me, Dios, de me! "Lord, deliver me from myself!" is a part of my litany, and the first voice of my retired imaginations. There is no man alone, because every man is a microcosm, and carries the whole world about him. Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus, though it be the apothegm of a wise man is yet true in the mouth of a fool: for indeed, though in a wilderness, a man is never alone; not only because he is with himself, and his own thoughts, but because he is with the devil, who ever consorts with our solitude, and is that unruly rebel that musters up those disordered motions which accompany our sequestered imaginations. And to speak more narrowly, there is no such thing as solitude, nor anything that can be said to be alone, and by itself, but God;—who is his own circle, and can subsist by himself; all others, besides their dissimilary and heterogeneous parts, which in a manner multiply their natures, cannot subsist without the concourse of God, and the society of that hand which doth uphold their natures. In brief, there can be nothing truly alone, and by its self, which is not truly one, and such is only God: all others do transcend an unity, and so by consequence are many.

XI

NOW for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not a history, but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable. For the world, I count it not an inn,

but an hospital; and a place not to live, but to die in. The world that I regard is myself; it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on: for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my altitude; for I am above Atlas's shoulders. The earth is a point not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us. That mass of flesh that circumscribes me limits not my mind. That surface that tells the heavens it hath an end cannot persuade me I have any. I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty. Though the number of the ark do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind. Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm, or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun. Nature tells me, I am the image of God, as well as Scripture. He that understands not thus much hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the alphabet of man. Let me not injure the felicity of others, If I say I am as happy as any. Ruat cœlum, fiat voluntas tua, salveth all; so that, whatsoever happens, it is but what our daily prayers desire. In brief, I am content; and what should providence add more? Surely this is it we call happiness, and this do I enjoy; with this I am happy in a dream, and as content to enjoy a happiness in a fancy, as others in a more apparent truth and reality. There is surely a nearer apprehension of any thing that delights us, in our dreams, than in our waked senses. Without this I were unhappy; for my awaked judgment discontents me, ever whispering unto me that I am from my friend, but my friendly dreams in the night requite me, and make me think I am within his arms. I thank God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest; for there is a satisfaction in them unto reasonable desires, and such as can be content with a fit of happiness. And surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this world, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams, to those of the next, as the phantasms of the night, to the conceit of the day. There is an equal delusion in both; and the one doth but seem to be the emblem or picture of the other. We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps; and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity, my ascendant was the

watery sign of Scorpio. I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardise of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams, and this time also would I choose for my devotions: but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that which hath passed. Aristotle, who hath written a singular tract of sleep, hath not, methinks, thoroughly defined it; nor yet Galen, though he seem to have corrected it; for those noctambulos and night-walkers, though in their sleep, do yet enjoy the action of their senses. We must therefore say that there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus; and that those abstracted and ecstatick souls do walk about in their own corpses, as spirits with the bodies they assume, wherein they seem to hear, see, and feel, though indeed the organs are destitute of sense, and their natures of those faculties that should inform them. Thus it is observed, that men sometimes, upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves. For then the soul begins to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality.

XII

WE term sleep a death; and yet it is waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life. 'Tis indeed a part of life that best expresseth death; for every man truly lives, so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself. Themistocles therefore, that slew his soldier in his sleep, was a merciful executioner: 'tis a kind of punishment the mildness of no laws hath invented; I wonder the fancy of Lucan and Seneca did not discover it. It is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily; a death which Adam died before his mortality; a death whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death. In fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God:—

The night is come, like to the day;
Depart not Thou, great God, away.
Let not my sins, black as the night,

Eclipse the lustre of Thy light.
Keep still in my horizon; for to me
The sun makes not the day, but Thee.
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep;
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close.
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my soul advance:
Make my sleep a holy trance:
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought
And with as active vigour run
My course as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death;—O make me try
By sleeping, what it is to die!
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with Thee.
And thus assur'd, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again:
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever!

This is the dormitive I take to bedward; I need no other laudanum than this to make me sleep; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection.

XIII

THE method I should use in distributive justice, I often observe in commutative; and keep a geometrical proportion in both, whereby becoming equable to others, I become unjust to myself, and supererogate in that common principle, "Do unto others as thou wouldst be done unto thyself." I was not born unto riches, neither is it, I think, my star to be wealthy; or if it were, the freedom of my mind, and frankness of my disposition, were able to contradict and cross my fates: for to me avarice seems not so much a vice, as a deplorable piece of madness; to conceive ourselves urinals, or be persuaded that we are dead, is not so ridiculous,

nor so many degrees beyond the power of hellebore, as this. The opinions of theory, and positions of men, are not so void of reason, as their practised conclusions. Some have held that snow is black, that the earth moves, that the soul is air, fire, water; but all this is philosophy: and there is no delirium, if we do but speculate the folly and indisputable dotage of avarice. To that subterraneous idol, and God of the earth, I do confess I am an atheist. I cannot persuade myself to honour that the world adores; whatsoever virtue its prepared substance may have within my body, it hath no influence nor operation without. I would not entertain a base design, or an action that should call me villain, for the Indies; and for this only do I love and honour my own soul, and have methinks two arms too few to embrace myself. Aristotle is too severe, that will not allow us to be truly liberal without wealth, and the bountiful hand of fortune; if this be true, I must confess I am charitable only in my liberal intentions, and bountiful well wishes. But if the example of the mite be not only an act of wonder, but an example of the noblest charity, surely poor men may also build hospitals, and the rich alone have not erected cathedrals. I have a private method which others observe not; I take the opportunity of myself to do good; I borrow occasion of charity from mine own necessities, and supply the wants of others, when I am in most need myself: for it is an honest stratagem to take advantage of ourselves, and so to husband the acts of virtue, that, where they are defective in one circumstance, they may repay their want, and multiply their goodness in another. I have not Peru in my desires, but a competence and ability to perform those good works to which He hath inclined my nature. He is rich who hath enough to be charitable; and it is hard to be so poor that a noble mind may not find a way to this piece of goodness. "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord:" there is more rhetorick in that one sentence than in a library of sermons. And indeed, if those sentences were understood by the reader with the same emphasis as they are delivered by the author, we needed not those volumes of instructions, but might be honest by an epitome. Upon this motive only I cannot behold a beggar without relieving his necessities with my purse, or his soul with my prayers. These scenical and accidental differences between us cannot make me forget that common and untoucht part of us both: there is under these centoes and miserable outsides, those mutilate and semi-bodies, a soul of the same alloy with our own, whose genealogy is God as well as ours, and in as fair a way to

salvation as ourselves. Statists that labour to contrive a commonwealth without poverty take away the object of our charity; not understanding only the commonwealth of a christian, but forgetting the prophecy of Christ.[9]

XIV

NOW, there is another part of charity, which is the basis and pillar of this, and that is the love of God for whom we love our neighbour; for this I think charity, to love God for Himself, and our neighbour for God. All that is truly amiable is God, or as it were a divided piece of Him, that retains a reflex or shadow of Himself. Nor is it strange that we should place affection on that which is invisible; all that we truly love is thus. What we adore under affection of our senses deserves not the honour of so pure a title. Thus we adore virtue, though to the eyes of sense she be invisible. Thus that part of our noble friends that we love is not that part that we embrace, but that insensible part that our arms cannot embrace. God being all goodness, can love nothing but Himself; He loves us but for that part which is as it were Himself, and the traduction of His Holy Spirit. Let us call to assize the loves of our parents, the affections of our wives and children, and they are all dumb shows and dreams, without reality, truth, or constancy. For first there is a strong bond of affection between us and our parents; yet how easily dissolved! We betake ourselves to a woman, forgetting our mother in a wife, and the womb that bare us in that which shall bear our image. This woman blessing us with children, our affection leaves the level it held before, and sinks from our bed unto our issue and picture of posterity: where affection holds no steady mansion; they growing up in years, desire our ends; or, applying themselves to a woman, take a lawful way to love another better than ourselves. Thus I perceive a man may be buried alive, and behold his grave in his own issue.

I conclude therefore, and say, there is no happiness under (or, as Copernicus will have it, above) the sun; nor any crambo in that repeated verity and burthen of all the wisdom of Solomon; "All is vanity and vexation of spirit;" there is no felicity in that the world adores. Aristotle, whilst he labours to refute the ideas of Plato, falls upon one himself: for his summum bonum is a chimæra; and there is no such thing as his felicity. That wherein God Himself is happy, the holy angels are happy, in whose de-

[9] "The poor ye shall have always with you."

fect the devils are unhappy;—that dare I call happiness: whatsoever conduceth unto this, may, with an easy metaphor, deserve that name; whatsoever else the world terms happiness is, to me, a story out of Pliny, an apparition or neat delusion, wherein there is no more of happiness than the name. Bless me in this life with but the peace of my conscience, command of my affections, the love of Thyself and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Cæsar! These are, O Lord, the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth: wherein I set no rule or limit to Thy hand or providence; dispose of me according to the wisdom of Thy pleasure. Thy will be done, though in my own undoing.

HYDRIOTAPHIA. URN BURIAL; OR, A DISCOURSE OF THE SEPULCHRAL URNS LATELY FOUND IN NORFOLK.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY. TO MY WORTHY AND HONOURED FRIEND, THOMAS LE GROS, OF CROSTWICK, ESQUIRE.

WHEN the funeral pyre was out, and the last valediction over, men took a lasting adieu of their interred friends, little expecting the curiosity of future ages should comment upon their ashes; and, having no old experience of the duration of their relicks, held no opinion of such after-considerations.

But who knows the fate of his bones, or how often he is to be buried? Who hath the oracle of his ashes, or whither they are to be scattered? The relicks of many lie like the ruins of Pompey's,* in all parts of the earth; and when they arrive at your hands these may seem to have wandered far, who, in a direct and meridian travel,[9] have but few miles of known earth between yourself and the pole.

That the bones of Theseus should be seen again in Athens[a] was not beyond conjecture and hopeful expectation: but that these should arise so opportunely to serve yourself was an hit of fate, and honour beyond prediction.

We cannot but wish these urns might have the effect of theatrical vessels and great Hippodrome urns[x] in Rome, to resound the acclamations and honour due unto you. But these are sad and sepulchral pitchers, which have no joyful voices; silently expressing old mortality, the ruins of forgotten times, and can only speak with life, how long in this corruptible frame some parts may be uncorrupted; yet able to outlast bones long unborn, and noblest pile among us.**

We present not these as any strange sight or spectacle unknown to your eyes, who have beheld the best of urns and noblest variety of ashes; who are yourself no slender master of antiquities, and can daily command the view of so many imperial faces; which raiseth your thoughts unto old things and consideration of times before you, when even living men were antiquities; when the living might exceed the dead, and to depart this world could not be properly said to go unto the greater

* Pompeios juvenes Asia atque Europa, sed ipsum terra tegit Libyos.

[9] Little directly but sea, between your house and Greenland.

[a] Brought back by Cimon. Plutarch.

[x] The great urns in the Hippodrome at Rome, conceived to resound the voices of people at their shows.

** Worthily possessed by that true gentleman, Sir Horatio Townshend, my honoured friend.

number.* And so run up your thoughts upon the Ancient of Days, the antiquary's truest object, unto whom the eldest parcels are young, and earth itself an infant, and without Egyptian[o] account makes but small noise in thousands.

We were hinted by the occasion, not catched the opportunity to write of old things, or intrude upon the antiquary. We are coldly drawn unto discourses of antiquities, who have scarce time before us to comprehend new things, or make out learned novelties. But seeing they arose, as they lay almost in silence among us, at least in short account suddenly passed over, we were very unwilling they should die again, and be buried twice among us.

Beside, to preserve the living, and make the dead to live, to keep men out of their urns, and discourse of human fragments in them, is not impertinent unto our profession; whose study is life and death, who daily behold examples of mortality, and of all men least need artificial mementos, or coffins by our bedside, to mind us of our graves.

'Tis time to observe occurrences, and let nothing remarkable escape us: the supinity of elder days hath left so much in silence, or time hath so martyred the records, that the most industrious heads[q] do find no easy work to erect a new Britannia.

'Tis opportune to look back upon old times, and contemplate our forefathers. Great examples grow thin, and to be fetched from the passed world. Simplicity flies away, and iniquity comes at long strides upon us. We have enough to do to make up ourselves from present and passed times, and the whole stage of things scarce serveth for our instruction. A complete piece of virtue must be made from the centos of all ages, as all the beauties of Greece could make but one handsome Venus.

When the bones of King Arthur were digged up,[x] the old race might think they beheld therein some originals of themselves; unto these of our urns none here can pretend relation, and can only behold the relicks of those persons who, in their life giving the laws unto their predecessors, after long obscurity, now lie at their mercies. But, remembering the early civility they brought

* Abiit ad plures.

[o] Which makes the world so many years old.

[q] Wherein Mr. Dugdale hath excellently well endeavoured, and worthy to be countenanced by ingenuous and noble persons.

[x] In the time of Henry the second.—Camden.

upon these countries, and forgetting long-passed mischiefs, we mercifully preserve their bones, and piss not upon their ashes. In the offer of these antiquities we drive not at ancient families, so long outlasted by them. We are far from erecting your worth upon the pillars of your forefathers, whose merits you illustrate. We honour your old virtues, conformable unto times before you, which are the noblest armoury. And, having long experience of your friendly conversation, void of empty formality, full of freedom, constant and generous honesty, I look upon you as a gem of the old rock,* and must profess myself even to urn and ashes,

Your ever faithful Friend and Servant,

THOMAS BROWNE.

Norwich, May 1st.

* Adamas de rupe veteri præstantissimus.

HYDRIOTAPHIA.

CHAPTER I.

IN the deep discovery of the subterranean world, a shallow part would satisfy some inquirers; who, if two or three yards were open about the surface, would not care to rake the bowels of Potosi,* and regions towards the centre. Nature hath furnished one part of the earth, and man another. The treasures of time lie high, in urns, coins, and monuments, scarce below the roots of some vegetables. Time hath endless rarities, and shows of all varieties; which reveals old things in heaven, makes new discoveries in earth, and even earth itself a discovery. That great antiquity America lay buried for thousands of years, and a large part of the earth is still in the urn unto us.

Though, if Adam were made out of an extract of the earth, all parts might challenge a restitution, yet few have returned their bones far lower than they might receive them; not affecting the graves of giants, under hilly and heavy coverings, but content with less than their own depth, have wished their bones might lie soft, and the earth be light upon them. Even such as hope to rise again, would not be content with central interment, or so desperately to place their relicks as to lie beyond discovery; and in no way to be seen again; which happy contrivance hath made communication with our forefathers, and left unto our view some parts, which they never beheld themselves.

Though earth hath engrossed the name, yet water hath proved the smartest grave; which in forty days swallowed almost mankind, and the living creation; fishes not wholly escaping, except the salt ocean were handsomely contempered by a mixture of the fresh element.

Many have taken voluminous pains to determine the state of the soul upon disunion; but men have been most phantastical in the singular contrivances of their corporal dissolution: whilst the soberest nations have rested in two ways, of simple inhumation and burning.

That carnal interment or burying was of the elder date, the old examples of Abraham and the patriarchs are sufficient to illustrate; and were without competition, if it could be made out that Adam was buried near Damascus, or Mount Calvary, according to some tradition. God Himself, that buried but one, was pleased to make choice of this way, collectible from Scripture expression, and the hot contest between Satan and the archangel, about

* The rich mountain of Peru.

discovering the body of Moses. But the practice of burning was also of great antiquity, and of no slender extent. For (not to derive the same from Hercules) noble descriptions there are hereof in the Grecian funerals of Homer, in the formal obsequies of Patroclus and Achilles; and somewhat elder in the Theban war, and solemn combustion of Meneceus, and Archemorus, contemporary unto Jair the eighth judge of Israel. Confirmable also among the Trojans, from the funeral pyre of Hector, burnt before the gates of Troy: and the burning of Penthesilea the Amazonian queen:* and long continuance of that practice, in the inward countries of Asia; while as low as the reign of Julian, we find that the king of Chionia[9] burnt the body of his son, and interred the ashes in a silver urn.

The same practice extended also far west;[2] and, besides Herulians, Getes, and Thracians, was in use with most of the Celtæ, Sarmatians, Germans, Gauls, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians; not to omit some use thereof among Carthaginians and Americans. Of greater antiquity among the Romans than most opinion, or Pliny seems to allow: for (beside the old Table Laws of burning or burying within the city,[x] of making the funeral fire with planed wood, or quenching the fire with wine), Manlius the consul burnt the body of his son: Numa, by special clause of his will, was not burnt but buried; and Remus was solemnly burned, according to the description of Ovid.**

Cornelius Sylla was not the first whose body was burned in Rome, but the first of the Cornelian family; which, being indifferently, not frequently used before, from that time spread, and became the prevalent practice. Not totally pursued in the highest run of cremation; for, when even crows were funerally burnt, Poppæa the wife of Nero found a peculiar grave interment.

* Q. Calaber. lib. i.

[9] Gumbrates, king of Chionia, a country near Persia.—Ammianus Marcellinus.

[2] Arnold. Montan. not. in Cæs. Commentar. L. Gyraldus. Kirkmannus.

[x] Tabul. part i. de jure sacro. Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito, neve urito, tom. 2. Rogum asciâ ne polito, tom. 4. Item Vigeneri Annotat. in Livium, et Alex. cum Tiraquello. Roscinus cum Dempstero.

** Ultima prolato subdita flamma rogo. De Fast. lib. iv. cum Car. Neapol. Anaptyxi.

Now as all customs were founded upon some bottom of reason, so there wanted not grounds for this; according to several apprehensions of the most rational dissolution. Some being of the opinion of Thales, that water was the original of all things, thought it most equal to submit unto the principle of putrefaction, and conclude in a moist relentment. Others conceived it most natural to end in fire, as due unto the master principle in the composition, according to the doctrine of Heraclitus; and therefore heaped up large piles, more actively to waft them toward that element, whereby they also declined a visible degeneration into worms, and left a lasting parcel of their composition.

Some apprehended a purifying virtue in fire, refining the grosser commixture, and firing out the æthereal particles so deeply immersed in it. And such as by tradition or rational conjecture held any hint of the final pyre of all things, or that this element at last must be too hard for all the rest, might conceive most naturally of the fiery dissolution. Others pretending no natural grounds, politickly declined the malice of enemies upon their buried bodies. Which consideration led Sylla unto this practice; who having thus served the body of Marius, could not but fear a retaliation upon his own; entertained after in the civil wars, and revengeful contentions of Rome.

But, as many nations embraced, and many left it indifferent, so others too much affected, or strictly declined this practice. The Indian Brachmans seemed too great friends unto fire, who burnt themselves alive, and thought it the noblest way to end their days in fire; according to the expression of the Indian, burning himself at Athens,* in his last words upon the pyre unto the amazed spectators, "Thus I make myself immortal."

But the Chaldeans, the great idolaters of fire, abhorred the burning of their carcases, as a pollution of that deity. The Persian magi declined it upon the like scruple, and being only solicitous about their bones, exposed their flesh to the prey of birds and dogs. And the Parsees now in India, which expose their bodies unto vultures, and endure not so much as feretra or biers of wood, the proper fuel of fire, are led on with such niceties. But whether the ancient Germans, who burned their dead, held any such fear to pollute their deity of Herthus, or the earth, we have no authentic conjecture.

* And therefore the inscription of his tomb was made accordingly.—Nic. Damasc.

The Egyptians were afraid of fire, not as a deity, but a devouring element, mercilessly consuming their bodies, and leaving too little of them; and therefore by precious embalmments, depositure in dry earths, or handsome inclosure in glasses, contrived the notablest ways of integral conservation. And from such Egyptian scruples, imbibed by Pythagoras, it may be conjectured that Numa and the Pythagorical sect first waved the fiery solution.
The Scythians, who swore by wind and sword, that is, by life and death, were so far from burning their bodies, that they declined all interment, and made their graves in the air: and the Ichthyophagi, or fish-eating nations about Egypt, affected the sea for their grave; thereby declining visible corruption, and restoring the debt of their bodies. Whereas the old heroes, in Homer, dreaded nothing more than water or drowning; probably upon the old opinion of the fiery substance of the soul, only extinguishable by that element; and therefore the poet emphatically implieth the total destruction in this kind of death, which happened to Ajax Oileus.[*]
The old Balearians[9] had a peculiar mode, for they used great urns and much wood, but no fire in their burials, while they bruised the flesh and bones of the dead, crowded them into urns, and laid heaps of wood upon them. And the Chinese[Q] without cremation or urnal interment of their bodies, make use of trees and much burning, while they plant a pine-tree by their grave, and burn great numbers of printed draughts of slaves and horses over it, civilly content with their companies in effigie, which barbarous nations exact unto reality.
Christians abhorred this way of obsequies, and though they sticked not to give their bodies to be burnt in their lives, detested that mode after death; affecting rather a deposiure than absumption, and properly submitting unto the sentence of God, to return not unto ashes but unto dust again, conformable unto the practice of the patriarchs, the interment of our Saviour, of Peter, Paul, and the ancient martyrs. And so far at last declining promiscuous interment with Pagans, that some have suffered ecclesiastical censures,[M] for making no scruple thereof.
The Musselman believers will never admit this fiery resolution.

[*] Which Magius reads ἐξαπόλωλε.
[9] Diodorus Siculus.
[Q] Ramusius in Navigat.
[M] Martialis the Bishop. Cyprian.

For they hold a present trial from their black and white angels in the grave; which they must have made so hollow, that they may rise upon their knees.

The Jewish nation, though they entertained the old way of inhumation, yet sometimes admitted this practice. For the men of Jabesh burnt the body of Saul; and by no prohibited practice, to avoid contagion or pollution, in time of pestilence, burnt the bodies of their friends.* And when they burnt not their dead bodies, yet sometimes used great burnings near and about them, deducible from the expressions concerning Jehoram, Zedechias, and the sumptuous pyre of Asa. And were so little averse from Pagan burning, that the Jews lamenting the death of Cæsar their friend, and revenger on Pompey, frequented the place where his body was burnt for many nights together.[o] And as they raised noble monuments and mausoleums for their own nation,[q] so they were not scrupulous in erecting some for others, according to the practice of Daniel, who left that lasting sepulchral pile in Ecbatana, for the Median and Persian kings.[x]

But even in times of subjection and hottest use, they conformed not unto the Roman practice of burning; whereby the prophecy was secured concerning the body of Christ, that it should not see corruption, or a bone should not be broken; which we believe was also providentially prevented, from the soldier's spear and nails that passed by the little bones both in His hands and feet; not of ordinary contrivance, that it should not corrupt on the cross, according to the laws of Roman crucifixion, or an hair of His head perish, though observable in Jewish customs, to cut the hairs of malefactors.

Nor in their long cohabitation with Egyptians, crept into a custom of their exact embalming, wherein deeply slashing the muscles, and taking out the brains and entrails, they had broken the subject of so entire a resurrection, nor fully answered the types of Enoch, Elijah, or Jonah, which yet to prevent or restore, was of equal facility unto that rising power, able to break the fasciations and bands of death, to get clear out of the cerecloth,

* Amos vi. 10.

[o] Sueton. in vita Jul. Cæs.

[q] As that magnificent sepulchral monument erected by Simon, 1 Macc. xiii.

[x] Κατασκεύασμα θαυμασίως πεποιημένον, whereof a Jewish priest had always the custody, unto Josephus his days.—Jos. Antiq. lib. x.

and an hundred pounds of ointment, and out of the sepulchre before the stone was rolled from it.

But though they embraced not this practice of burning, yet entertained they many ceremonies agreeable unto Greek and Roman obsequies. And he that observeth their funeral feasts, their lamentations at the grave, their music, and weeping mourners; how they closed the eyes of their friends, how they washed, anointed, and kissed the dead; may easily conclude these were not mere Pagan civilities. But whether that mournful burthen, and treble calling out after Absalom,* had any reference unto the last conclamation, and triple valediction, used by other nations, we hold but a wavering conjecture.

Civilians make sepulture but of the law of nations, others do naturally found it and discover it also in animals. They that are so thick-skinned as still to credit the story of the Phœnix, may say something for animal burning. More serious conjectures find some examples of sepulture in elephants, cranes, the sepulchral cells of pismires, and practice of bees,—which civil society carrieth out their dead, and hath exequies, if not interments.

CHAPTER II.

THE solemnities, ceremonies, rites of their cremation or interment, so solemnly delivered by authors, we shall not disparage our reader to repeat. Only the last and lasting part in their urns, collected bones and ashes, we cannot wholly omit or decline that subject, which occasion lately presented, in some discovered among us.

In a field of Old Walsingham, not many months past, were digged up between forty and fifty urns, deposited in a dry and sandy soil, not a yard deep, nor far from one another.—Not all strictly of one figure, but most answering these described: some containing two pounds of bones, distinguishable in skulls, ribs, jaws, thigh bones, and teeth, with fresh impressions of their combustion; besides the extraneous substances, like pieces of small boxes, or combs handsomely wrought, handles of small brass instruments, brazen nippers, and in one some kind of opal.[a]

Near the same plot of ground, for about six yards compass, were digged up coals and incinerated substances, which begat conjecture that this was the ustrina or place of burning their bodies,

* 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

[a] In one sent me by my worthy friend, Dr. Thomas Witherly of Walsingham.

or some sacrificing place unto the manes, which was properly below the surface of the ground, as the arae and altars unto the gods and heroes above it.

That these were the urns of Romans from the common custom and place where they were found, is no obscure conjecture, not far from a Roman garrison, and but five miles from Brancaster, set down by ancient record under the name of Branodunum. And where the adjoining town, containing seven parishes, in no very different sound, but Saxon termination, still retains the name of Burnham, which being an early station, it is not improbable the neighbour parts were filled with habitations, either of Romans themselves, or Britons Romanized, which observed the Roman customs.

Nor is it improbable, that the Romans early possessed this country. For though we meet not with such strict particulars of these parts before the new institution of Constantine and military charge of the count of the Saxon shore, and that about the Saxon invasions, the Dalmatian horsemen were in the garrison of Brancaster; yet in the time of Claudius, Vespasian, and Severus, we find no less than three legions dispersed through the province of Britain. And as high as the reign of Claudius a great overthrow was given unto the Iceni, by the Roman lieutenant Ostorius. Not long after, the country was so molested, that, in hope of a better state, Prasutagus bequeathed his kingdom unto Nero and his daughters; and Boadicea, his queen, fought the last decisive battle with Paulinus. After which time, and conquest of Agricola, the lieutenant of Vespasian, probable it is, they wholly possessed this country; ordering it into garrisons or habitations best suitable with their securities. And so some Roman habitations not improbable in these parts, as high as the time of Vespasian, where the Saxons after seated, in whose thin-filled maps we yet find the name of Walsingham. Now if the Iceni were but Gammadims, Anconians, or men that lived in an angle, wedge, or elbow of Britain, according to the original etymology, this country will challenge the emphatical appellation, as most properly making the elbow or iken of Icenia.

That Britain was notably populous is undeniable, from that expression of Cæsar.* That the Romans themselves were early in no small numbers, seventy thousand, with their associates slain

* Hominum infinita multitudo est, creberrimaque; ædificia ferè Gallicis consimilia.—Cæs. de Bello Gal. l. v.

by Boadicea, affords a sure account. And though many Roman habitations are now unknown, yet some, by old works, rampiers, coins, and urns, do testify their possessions. Some urns have been found at Castor, some also about Southcreak, and, not many years past, no less than ten in a field at Buxton,* not near any recorded garrison. Nor is it strange to find Roman coins of copper and silver among us; of Vespasian, Trajan, Adrian, Commodus, Antoninus, Severus, &c.; but the greater number of Dioclesian, Constantine, Constans, Valens, with many of Victorinus Posthumius, Tetricus, and the thirty tyrants in the reign of Gallienus; and some as high as Adrianus have been found about Thetford, or Sitomagus, mentioned in the Itinerary of Antoninus, as the way from Venta or Castor unto London.[9] But the most frequent discovery is made at the two Castors by Norwich and Yarmouth,[9] at Burghcastle, and Brancaster.[¥]

Besides the Norman, Saxon, and Danish pieces of Cuthred, Canutus, William, Matilda,** and others, some British coins of gold have been dispersedly found, and no small number of silver pieces near Norwich,[9][9] with a rude head upon the obverse, and an ill-formed horse on the reverse, with inscriptions Ic. Duro. T.; whether implying Iceni, Durotriges, Tascia, or Trinobantes, we leave to higher conjecture. Vulgar chronology will have Norwich Castle as old as Julius Cæsar; but his distance from

* In the ground of my worthy friend Robert Jegon, Esq.; wherein some things contained were preserved by the most worthy Sir William Paston, Bart.

[9] From Castor to Thetford the Romans accounted thirty-two miles, and from thence observed not our common road to London, but passed by Combretonium ad Ansam, Canonium, Cæsaromagus, &c., by Bretenham, Coggeshall, Chelmsford, Brentwood, &c.

[9] Most at Castor by Yarmouth, found in a place called Eastbloudy-burgh Furlong, belonging to Mr. Thomas Wood, a person of civility, industry, and knowledge in this way, who hath made observation of remarkable things about him, and from whom we have received divers silver and copper coins.

[¥] Belonging to that noble gentleman, and true example of worth, Sir Ralph Hare, Bart., my honoured friend.

** A piece of Maud, the empress, said to be found in Buckenham Castle, with this inscription,—Elle n' a elle.

[9][9] At Thorpe.

these parts, and its gothick form of structure, abridgeth such antiquity. The British coins afford conjecture of early habitation in these parts, though the city of Norwich arose from the ruins of Venta; and though, perhaps, not without some habitation before, was enlarged, builded, and nominated by the Saxons. In what bulk or populosity it stood in the old East-Angle monarchy tradition and history are silent. Considerable it was in the Danish eruptions, when Sueno burnt Thetford and Norwich,* and Ulfketel, the governor thereof, was able to make some resistance, and after endeavoured to burn the Danish navy.

How the Romans left so many coins in countries of their conquests seems of hard resolution; except we consider how they buried them under ground when, upon barbarous invasions, they were fain to desert their habitations in most part of their empire, and the strictness of their laws forbidding to transfer them to any other uses: wherein the Spartans[o] were singular, who, to make their copper money useless, contempered it with vinegar. That the Britons left any, some wonder, since their money was iron and iron rings before Cæsar; and those of after-stamp by permission, and but small in bulk and bigness. That so few of the Saxons remain, because, overcome by succeeding conquerors upon the place, their coins, by degrees, passed into other stamps and the marks of after-ages.

Than the time of these urns deposited, or precise antiquity of these relicks, nothing of more uncertainty; for since the lieutenant of Claudius seems to have made the first progress into these parts, since Boadicea was overthrown by the forces of Nero, and Agricola put a full end to these conquests, it is not probable the country was fully garrisoned or planted before; and, therefore, however these urns might be of later date, not likely of higher antiquity.

And the succeeding emperors desisted not from their conquests in these and other parts, as testified by history and medal inscription yet extant: the province of Britain, in so divided a distance from Rome, beholding the faces of many imperial persons, and in large account; no fewer than Cæsar, Claudius, Britannicus, Vespasian, Titus, Adrian, Severus, Commodus, Geta, and Caracalla.

A great obscurity herein, because no medal or emperor's coin

* Brampton Abbas Forevallensis.
[o] Plut. in vitâ Lycurg.

enclosed, which might denote the date of their interments; observable in many urns, and found in those of Spitalfields, by London,[*] which contained the coins of Claudius, Vespasian, Commodus, Antoninus, attended with lacrymatories, lamps, bottles of liquor, and other appurtenances of affectionate superstition, which in these rural interments were wanting.

Some uncertainty there is from the period or term of burning, or the cessation of that practice. Macrobius affirmeth it was disused in his days; but most agree, though without authentic record, that it ceased with the Antonini,—most safely to be understood after the reign of those emperors which assumed the name of Antoninus, extending unto Heliogabalus. Not strictly after Marcus; for about fifty years later, we find the magnificent burning and consecration of Severus; and, if we so fix this period or cessation, these urns will challenge above thirteen hundred years.

But whether this practice was only then left by emperors and great persons, or generally about Rome, and not in other provinces, we hold no authentic account; for after Tertullian, in the days of Minucius, it was obviously objected upon Christians, that they condemned the practice of burning.[¶] And we find a passage in Sidonius,[‖] which asserteth that practice in France unto a lower account. And, perhaps, not fully disused till Christianity fully established, which gave the final extinction to these sepulchral bonfires.

Whether they were the bones of men, or women, or children, no authentic decision from ancient custom in distinct places of burial. Although not improbably conjectured, that the double sepulture, or burying-place of Abraham,[**] had in it such intention. But from exility of bones, thinness of skulls, smallness of teeth, ribs, and thigh bones, not improbable that many thereof were persons of minor age, or women. Confirmable also from things contained in them. In most were found substances resembling combs, plates like boxes, fastened with iron pins, and handsomely overwrought like the necks or bridges of musical instruments; long brass plates overwrought like the handles of neat implements;

[*] Stowe's Survey of London.

[¶] Execrantur rogos, et damnant ignium sepulturam.—Min. in Oct.

[‖] Sidon. Apollinaris.

[**] Gen. xxiii. 4.

brazen nippers, to pull away hair; and in one a kind of opal, yet maintaining a bluish colour.

Now that they accustomed to burn or bury with them things wherein they excelled, delighted, or which were dear unto them, either as farewells unto all pleasure, or vain apprehension that they might use them in the other world, is testified by all antiquity, observable from the gem or beryl ring upon the finger of Cynthia, the mistress of Propertius, when after her funeral pyre her ghost appeared unto him; and notably illustrated from the contents of that Roman urn preserved by Cardinal Farnese,* wherein besides great number of gems with heads of gods and goddesses, were found an ape of agath, a grasshopper, an elephant of amber, a crystal ball, three glasses, two spoons, and six nuts of crystal; and beyond the content of urns, in the monument of Childerick the first,[9] and fourth king from Pharamond, casually discovered three years past at Tournay, restoring unto the world much gold richly adorning his sword, two hundred rubies, many hundred imperial coins, three hundred golden bees, the bones and horse-shoes of his horse interred with him, according to the barbarous magnificence of those days in their sepulchral obsequies. Although, if we steer by the conjecture of many and Septuagint expression, some trace thereof may be found even with the ancient Hebrews, not only from the sepulchral treasure of David, but the circumcision knives which Joshua also buried.

Some men, considering the contents of these urns, lasting pieces and toys included in them, and the custom of burning with many other nations, might somewhat doubt whether all urns found among us, were properly Roman relicks, or some not belonging unto our British, Saxon, or Danish forefathers.

In the form of burial among the ancient Britons, the large discourses of Cæsar, Tacitus, and Strabo are silent. For the discovery whereof, with other particulars, we much deplore the loss of that letter which Cicero expected or received from his brother Quintus, as a resolution of British customs; or the account which might have been made by Scribonius Largus, the physician, accompanying the Emperor Claudius, who might have also discovered that frugal bit of the old Britons,[q] which in the bigness of a bean could satisfy their thirst and hunger.

* Vigeneri Annot. in 4. Liv.
[9] Chifflet. in Anast. Childer.
[q] Dionis excerpta per Xiphilin. in Severo.

But that the Druids and ruling priests used to burn and bury, is expressed by Pomponius; that Bellinus, the brother of Brennus, and king of the Britons, was burnt, is acknowledged by Polydorus, as also by Amandus Zierexensis in Historia, and Pineda in his Universa Historia (Spanish). That they held that practice in Gallia, Cæsar expressly delivereth. Whether the Britons (probably descended from them, of like religion, language, and manners) did not sometimes make use of burning, or whether at least such as were after civilized unto the Roman life and manners, conformed not unto this practice, we have no historical assertion or denial. But since, from the account of Tacitus, the Romans early wrought so much civility upon the British stock, that they brought them to build temples, to wear the gown, and study the Roman laws and language, that they conformed also unto their religious rites and customs in burials, seems no improbable conjecture.

That burning the dead was used in Sarmatia is affirmed by Gaguinus; that the Sueons and Gothlanders used to burn their princes and great persons, is delivered by Saxo and Olaus; that this was the old German practice, is also asserted by Tacitus. And though we are bare in historical particulars of such obsequies in this island, or that the Saxons, Jutes, and Angles burnt their dead, yet came they from parts where 'twas of ancient practice; the Germans using it, from whom they were descended. And even in Jutland and Sleswick in Anglia Cymbrica, urns with bones were found not many years before us.

But the Danish and northern nations have raised an era or point of compute from their custom of burning their dead;* some deriving it from Unguinus, some from Frotho the great, who ordained by law, that princes and chief commanders should be committed unto the fire, though the common sort had the common grave interment. So Starkatterus, that old hero, was burnt, and Ringo royally burnt the body of Harold the king slain by him. What time this custom generally expired in that nation, we discern no assured period; whether it ceased before Christianity, or upon their conversion, by Ausgurius the Gaul, in the time of Ludovicus Pius the son of Charles the Great, according to good computes; or whether it might not be used by some persons, while for an hundred and eighty years Paganism and Christianity were promiscuously embraced among them, there is no assured con-

* Roisold, Brendetyde. Ild tyde.

clusion. About which times the Danes were busy in England, and particularly infested this county; where many castles and strongholds were built by them, or against them, and great number of names and families still derived from them. But since this custom was probably disused before their invasion or conquest, and the Romans confessedly practised the same since their possession of this island, the most assured account will fall upon the Romans, or Britons Romanized.

However, certain it is, that urns conceived of no Roman original, are often digged up both in Norway and Denmark, handsomely described, and graphically represented by the learned physician Wormius.* And in some parts of Denmark in no ordinary number, as stands delivered by authors exactly describing those countries.๑ And they contained not only bones, but many other substances in them, as knives, pieces of iron, brass, and wood, and one of Norway a brass gilded jew's-harp.

Nor were they confused or careless in disposing the noblest sort, while they placed large stones in circle about the urns or bodies which they interred: somewhat answerable unto the monument of Rollrich stones in England,ๆ or sepulchral monument probably erected by Rollo, who after conquered Normandy; where 'tis not improbable somewhat might be discovered. Meanwhile to what nation or person belonged that large urn found at Ashbury,⁂ containing mighty bones, and a buckler; what those large urns found at Little Massingham;** or why the Anglesea urns are placed with their mouths downward, remains yet undiscovered.

CHAPTER III.

PLAISTERED and whited sepulchres were anciently affected in cadaverous and corrupted burials; and the rigid Jews were wont to garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.๑๑ Ulysses, in Hecuba, cared not how meanly he lived, so he might find a noble tomb after death.ๆๆ Great princes affected great monuments; and the fair and larger urns contained no vulgar ashes, which makes

* Olai Wormii Monumenta et Antiquitat. Dan.

๑ Adolphus Cyprius in Annal. Sleswic. urnis adeo abundabat collis, &c.

ๆ In Oxfordshire, Camden.

⁂ In Cheshire, Twinus de rebus Albionicis.

** In Norfolk, Hollingshead.

๑๑ Matt. xxiii.

ๆๆ Euripides.

that disparity in those which time discovereth among us. The present urns were not of one capacity, the largest containing above a gallon, some not much above half that measure; nor all of one figure, wherein there is no strict conformity in the same or different countries; observable from those represented by Casalius, Bosio, and others, though all found in Italy; while many have handles, ears, and long necks, but most imitate a circular figure, in a spherical and round composure; whether from any mystery, best duration or capacity, were but a conjecture. But the common form with necks was a proper figure, making our last bed like our first; nor much unlike the urns of our nativity while we lay in the nether part of the earth,* and inward vault of our microcosm. Many urns are red, these but of a black colour somewhat smooth, and dully sounding, which begat some doubt, whether they were burnt, or only baked in oven or sun, according to the ancient way, in many bricks, tiles, pots, and testaceous works; and, as the word testa is properly to be taken, when occurring without addition and chiefly intended by Pliny, when he commendeth bricks and tiles of two years old, and to make them in the spring. Nor only these concealed pieces, but the open magnificence of antiquity, ran much in the artifice of clay. Hereof the house of Mausolus was built, thus old Jupiter stood in the Capitol, and the statua of Hercules, made in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, was extant in Pliny's days. And such as declined burning or funeral urns, affected coffins of clay, according to the mode of Pythagoras, a way preferred by Varro. But the spirit of great ones was above these circumscriptions, affecting copper, silver, gold, and porphyry urns, wherein Severus lay, after a serious view and sentence on that which should contain him.[¶] Some of these urns were thought to have been silvered over, from sparklings in several pots, with small tinsel parcels; uncertain whether from the earth, or the first mixture in them.

Among these urns we could obtain no good account of their coverings; only one seemed arched over with some kind of brick-work. Of those found at Buxton, some were covered with flints, some, in other parts, with tiles; those at Yarmouth Caster were closed with Roman bricks, and some have proper earthen covers adapted and fitted to them. But in the Homerical urn of Patroclus, whatever was the solid tegument, we find the immediate covering to

* Psal. lxiii.

¶ Χωρήσεις τὸνἄνθρωπον, ὃν ἡ οἰκουμένη οὐκ ἐχώρησεν.—Dion.

be a purple piece of silk: and such as had no covers might have the earth closely pressed into them, after which disposure were probably some of these, wherein we found the bones and ashes half mortared unto the sand and sides of the urn, and some long roots of quich, or dog's-grass, wreathed about the bones.

No lamps, included liquors, lacrymatories, or tear bottles, attended these rural urns, either as sacred unto the manes, or passionate expressions of their surviving friends. While with rich flames, and hired tears, they solemnized their obsequies, and in the most lamented monuments made one part of their inscriptions.* Some find sepulchral vessels containing liquors, which time hath incrassated into jellies. For, besides these lacrymatories, notable lamps, with vessels of oils, and aromatical liquors, attended noble ossuaries; and some yet retaining a vinosity[๑] and spirit in them, which, if any have tasted, they have far exceeded the palates of antiquity. Liquors not to be computed by years of annual magistrates, but by great conjunctions and the fatal periods of kingdoms.[๑] The draughts of consulary date were but crude unto these, and Opimian wine[ж] but in the must unto them.

In sundry graves and sepulchres we meet with rings, coins, and chalices. Ancient frugality was so severe, that they allowed no gold to attend the corpse, but only that which served to fasten their teeth.** Whether the opaline stone in this urn were burnt upon the finger of the dead, or cast into the fire by some affectionate friend, it will consist with either custom. But other incinerable substances were found so fresh, that they could feel no singe from fire. These, upon view, were judged to be wood; but, sinking in water, and tried by the fire, we found them to be bone or ivory. In their hardness and yellow colour they most resembled box, which, in old expressions, found the epithet of eternal,[๑๑] and perhaps in such conservatories might have passed uncorrupted.

That bay leaves were found green in the tomb of S. Humbert,[๑๑]

* Cum lacrymis posuere.

๑ Lazius.

๑ About five hundred years.—Plato.

ж Vinum Opiminianum annorum centum.—Petron.

** 12 Tabul. l. xi. De Jure Sacro. Neve aurum addito, ast quoi auro dentes vincti erunt id cum illo sepelire urereve, sine fraude esto.

๑๑ Plin. l. xvi. Inter ξύλα ἀσαπῆ numerat Theophrastus.

๑๑ Surius.

after an hundred and fifty years, was looked upon as miraculous. Remarkable it was unto old spectators, that the cypress of the temple of Diana lasted so many hundred years. The wood of the ark, and olive-rod of Aaron, were older at the captivity; but the cypress of the ark of Noah was the greatest vegetable of antiquity, if Josephus were not deceived by some fragments of it in his days: to omit the moor logs and fir trees found under-ground in many parts of England; the undated ruins of winds, floods, or earthquakes, and which in Flanders still show from what quarter they fell, as generally lying in a north-east position.*

But though we found not these pieces to be wood, according to first apprehensions, yet we missed not altogether of some woody substance; for the bones were not so clearly picked but some coals were found amongst them; a way to make wood perpetual, and a fit associate for metal, whereon was laid the foundation of the great Ephesian temple, and which were made the lasting tests of old boundaries and landmarks. Whilst we look on these, we admire not observations of coals found fresh after four hundred years.[9] In a long-deserted habitation[9] even egg-shells have been found fresh, not tending to corruption.

In the monument of King Childerick the iron relicks were found all rusty and crumbling into pieces; but our little iron pins, which fastened the ivory works, held well together, and lost not their magnetical quality, though wanting a tenacious moisture for the firmer union of parts; although it be hardly drawn into fusion, yet that metal soon submitteth unto rust and dissolution. In the brazen pieces we admired not the duration, but the freedom from rust, and ill savour, upon the hardest attrition; but now exposed unto the piercing atoms of air, in the space of a few months, they begin to spot and betray their green entrails. We conceive not these urns to have descended thus naked as they appear, or to have entered their graves without the old habit of flowers. The urn of Philopœmen was so laden with flowers and ribbons, that it afforded no sight of itself. The rigid Lycurgus allowed olive and myrtle. The Athenians might fairly except against the practice of Democritus, to be buried up in honey, as fearing to embezzle a great commodity of their country, and the best of that kind in Europe. But Plato seemed too frugally politick, who allowed

* Gorop. Becanus in Niloscopio.
[9] Of Beringuccio nella pyrotechnia.
[9] At Elmeham.

no larger monument than would contain four heroick verses, and designed the most barren ground for sepulture: though we cannot commend the goodness of that sepulchral ground which was set at no higher rate than the mean salary of Judas. Though the earth had confounded the ashes of these ossuaries, yet the bones were so smartly burnt, that some thin plates of brass were found half melted among them. Whereby we apprehend they were not of the meanest carcases, perfunctorily fired, as sometimes in military, and commonly in pestilence, burnings; or after the manner of abject corpses, huddled forth and carelessly burnt, without the Esquiline Port at Rome; which was an affront continued upon Tiberius, while they but half burnt his body,* and in the amphitheatre, according to the custom in notable malefactors; whereas Nero seemed not so much to fear his death as that his head should be cut off and his body not burnt entire.

Some, finding many fragments of skulls in these urns, suspected a mixture of bones; in none we searched was there cause of such conjecture, though sometimes they declined not that practice.— The ashes of Domitian[o] were mingled with those of Julia; of Achilles with those of Patroclus. All urns contained not single ashes; without confused burnings they affectionately compounded their bones; passionately endeavouring to continue their living unions. And when distance of death denied such conjunctions, unsatisfied affections conceived some satisfaction to be neighbours in the grave, to lie urn by urn, and touch but in their manes. And many were so curious to continue their living relations, that they contrived large and family urns, wherein the ashes of their nearest friends and kindred might successively be received,[q] at least some parcels thereof, while their collateral memorials lay in minor vessels about them.

Antiquity held too light thoughts from objects of mortality, while some drew provocatives of mirth from anatomies,[x] and jugglers showed tricks with skeletons. When fiddlers made not so pleasant mirth as fencers, and men could sit with quiet stom-

* Sueton. in vitâ Tib. Et in amphitheatro semiustulandum, not. Casaub.

[o] Sueton. in vitâ Domitian.

[q] See the most learned and worthy Mr. M. Casaubon upon Antoninus.

[x] Sic erimus cuncti, &c. Ergo dum vivimus vivamus.

achs, while hanging was played before them.* Old considerations made few mementos by skulls and bones upon their monuments. In the Egyptian obelisks and hieroglyphical figures it is not easy to meet with bones. The sepulchral lamps speak nothing less than sepulture, and in their literal draughts prove often obscene and antick pieces. Where we find D.M.[o] it is obvious to meet with sacrificing pateras and vessels of libation upon old sepulchral monuments. In the Jewish hypogæum[q] and subterranean cell at Rome, was little observable beside the variety of lamps and frequent draughts of the holy candlestick. In authentick draughts of Anthony and Jerome we meet with thigh bones and death's-heads; but the cemeterial cells of ancient Christians and martyrs were filled with draughts of Scripture stories; not declining the flourishes of cypress, palms, and olive, and the mystical figures of peacocks, doves, and cocks; but iterately affecting the portraits of Enoch, Lazarus, Jonas, and the vision of Ezekiel, as hopeful draughts, and hinting imagery of the resurrection, which is the life of the grave, and sweetens our habitations in the land of moles and pismires.

Gentile inscriptions precisely delivered the extent of men's lives, seldom the manner of their deaths, which history itself so often leaves obscure in the records of memorable persons. There is scarce any philosopher but dies twice or thrice in Laertius; nor almost any life without two or three deaths in Plutarch; which makes the tragical ends of noble persons more favourably resented by compassionate readers who find some relief in the election of such differences.

The certainty of death is attended with uncertainties, in time, manner, places. The variety of monuments hath often obscured true graves; and cenotaphs confounded sepulchres. For beside their real tombs, many have found honorary and empty sepulchres. The variety of Homer's monuments made him of various countries. Euripides[x] had his tomb in Attica, but his sepulture

* Ἀγώνον παίζειν. A barbarous pastime at feasts, when men stood upon a rolling globe, with their necks in a rope and a knife in their hands, ready to cut it when the stone was rolled away; wherein if they failed, they lost their lives, to the laughter of their spectators.—Athenæus.

[o] Diis manibus.

[q] Bosio.

[x] Pausan. in Atticis.

in Macedonia. And Severus[*] found his real sepulchre in Rome, but his empty grave in Gallia.

He that lay in a golden urn[⊙] eminently above the earth, was not like to find the quiet of his bones. Many of these urns were broke by a vulgar discoverer in hope of enclosed treasure. The ashes of Marcellus[♎] were lost above ground, upon the like account. Where profit hath prompted, no age hath wanted such miners. For which the most barbarous expilators found the most civil rhetorick:—"Gold once out of the earth is no more due unto it; what was unreasonably committed to the ground, is reasonably resumed from it; let monuments and rich fabricks, not riches, adorn men's ashes. The commerce of the living is not to be transferred unto the dead; it is not injustice to take that which none complains to lose, and no man is wronged where no man is possessor."

What virtue yet sleeps in this terra damnata and aged cinders, were petty magic to experiment. These crumbling relicks and long fired particles superannuate such expectations; bones, hairs, nails, and teeth of the dead, were the treasures of old sorcerers. In vain we revive such practices; present superstition too visibly perpetuates the folly of our forefathers, wherein unto old observation[♓] this island was so complete, that it might have instructed Persia.

Plato's historian of the other world lies twelve days incorrupted, while his soul was viewing the large stations of the dead. How to keep the corpse seven days from corruption by anointing and washing, without exenteration, were an hazardable piece of art, in our choicest practice. How they made distinct separation of bones and ashes from fiery admixture, hath found no historical solution; though they seemed to make a distinct collection, and overlooked not Pyrrhus his toe. Some provision they might make by fictile vessels, coverings, tiles, or flat stones, upon and about the body (and in the same field, not far from these urns, many stones were found under ground), as also by careful separation

[*] Lamprid. in vit. Alexand. Severi.

[⊙] Trajanus.—Dion.

[♎] Plut. in vit. Marcelli. The commission of the Gothish King Theodoric for finding out sepulchral treasure.—Cassiodor. var. I. 4.

[♓] Britannia hodie eam attonite celebrat tantis ceremoniis ut dedisse Persis videri possit.—Plin. I. 29.

of extraneous matter, composing and raking up the burnt bones with forks, observable in that notable lamp of Galvanus.* Martianus, who had the sight of the vas ustrinum[9] or vessel wherein they burnt the dead, found in the Esquiline field at Rome, might have afforded clearer solution. But their insatisfaction herein begat that remarkable invention in the funeral pyres of some princes, by incombustible sheets made with a texture of asbestos, incremable flax, or salamander's wool, which preserved their bones and ashes incommixed.

How the bulk of a man should sink into so few pounds of bones and ashes, may seem strange unto any who considers not its constitution, and how slender a mass will remain upon an open and urging fire of the carnal composition. Even bones themselves, reduced into ashes, do abate a notable proportion. And consisting much of a volatile salt, when that is fired out, make a light kind of cinders. Although their bulk be disproportionable to their weight, when the heavy principle of salt is fired out, and the earth almost only remaineth; observable in sallow, which makes more ashes than oak, and discovers the common fraud of selling ashes by measure, and not by ponderation.

Some bones make best skeletons,[9] some bodies quick and speediest ashes. Who would expect a quick flame from hydropical Heraclitus? The poisoned soldier when his belly brake, put out two pyres in Plutarch.† But in the plague of Athens,** one private pyre served two or three intruders; and the Saracens burnt in large heaps, by the king of Castile,[99] showed how little fuel sufficeth. Though the funeral pyre of Patroclus took up an hundred foot,[99] a piece of an old boat burnt Pompey; and if the burthen of Isaac were sufficient for an holocaust, a man may carry his own pyre.

* To be seen in Licet. de reconditis veterum lucernis (p. 599, fol. 1653).

[9] Typograph. Roma ex Martiano. Erat et vas ustrinum appellatum, quod in eo cadavera comburerentur. Cap. de Campo Esquilino.

[9] Old bones according to Lyserus. Those of young persons not tall nor fat according to Columbus.

† In vitâ Gracc.

** Thucydides.

[99] Laurent. Valla.

[99] Ἑκατόμπεδον ἔνθα ἤ ἔνθα.

From animals are drawn good burning lights, and good medicines against burning.* Though the seminal humour seems of a contrary nature to fire, yet the body completed proves a combustible lump, wherein fire finds flame even from bones, and some fuel almost from all parts; though the metropolis of humidity[⊙] seems least disposed unto it, which might render the skulls of these urns less burned than other bones. But all flies or sinks before fire almost in all bodies: when the common ligament is dissolved, the attenuable parts ascend, the rest subside in coal, calx, or ashes.

To burn the bones of the king of Edom for lime,[♌] seems no irrational ferity; but to drink of the ashes of dead relations,[♓] a passionate prodigality. He that hath the ashes of his friend, hath an everlasting treasure; where fire taketh leave, corruption slowly enters. In bones well burnt, fire makes a wall against itself; experimented in cupels, and tests of metals, which consist of such ingredients. What the sun compoundeth, fire analyzeth, not transmuteth. That devouring agent leaves almost always a morsel for the earth, whereof all things are but a colony; and which, if time permits, the mother element will have in their primitive mass again.

He that looks for urns and old sepulchral relicks, must not seek them in the ruins of temples, where no religion anciently placed them. These were found in a field, according to ancient custom, in noble or private burial; the old practice of the Canaanites, the family of Abraham, and the burying-place of Joshua, in the borders of his possessions; and also agreeable unto Roman practice to bury by highways, whereby their monuments were under eye;—memorials of themselves, and mementos of mortality unto living passengers; whom the epitaphs of great ones were fain to beg to stay and look upon them,—a language though sometimes used, not so proper in church inscriptions.** The sensible rhetorick of the dead, to exemplarity of good life, first admitted the bones of pious men and martyrs within church walls, which in succeeding ages crept into promiscuous practice: while

* Alb. Ovor.
⊙ The brain. Hippocrates.
♌ Amos. ii. 1.
♓ As Artemisia of her husband Mausolus.
** Siste viator.

Constantine was peculiarly favoured to be admitted into the church porch, and the first thus buried in England, was in the days of Cuthred.

Christians dispute how their bodies should lie in the grave.* In urnal interment they clearly escaped this controversy. Though we decline the religious consideration, yet in cemeterial and narrower burying-places, to avoid confusion and cross-position, a certain posture were to be admitted: which even Pagan civility observed. The Persians lay north and south; the Megarians and Phœnicians placed their heads to the east; the Athenians, some think, towards the west, which Christians still retain. And Beda will have it to be the posture of our Saviour. That he was crucified with his face toward the west, we will not contend with tradition and probable account; but we applaud not the hand of the painter, in exalting his cross so high above those on either side: since hereof we find no authentic account in history, and even the crosses found by Helena, pretend no such distinction from longitude or dimension.

To be gnawed out of our graves, to have our skulls made drinking-bowls, and our bones turned into pipes, to delight and sport our enemies, are tragical abominations escaped in burning burials. Urnal interments and burnt relicks lie not in fear of worms, or to be an heritage for serpents. In carnal sepulture, corruptions seem peculiar unto parts; and some speak of snakes out of the spinal marrow. But while we suppose common worms in graves, 'tis not easy to find any there; few in churchyards above a foot deep, fewer or none in churches though in fresh-decayed bodies. Teeth, bones, and hair, give the most lasting defiance to corruption. In an hydropical body, ten years buried in the churchyard, we met with a fat concretion, where the nitre of the earth, and the salt and lixivious liquor of the body, had coagulated large lumps of fat into the consistence of the hardest Castile soap, whereof part remaineth with us. After a battle with the Persians, the Roman corpses decayed in few days, while the Persian bodies remained dry and uncorrupted. Bodies in the same ground do not uniformly dissolve, nor bones equally moulder; whereof in the opprobrious disease, we expect no long duration. The body of the Marquis of Dorset seemed sound and handsomely cere-clothed, that after seventy-eight years was found uncorrup-

* Kirkmannus de funer.

ted.* Common tombs preserve not beyond powder: a firmer consistence and compage of parts might be expected from arefaction, deep burial, or charcoal. The greatest antiquities of mortal bodies may remain in putrefied bones, whereof, though we take not in the pillar of Lot's wife, or metamorphosis of Ortelius,[⊕] some may be older than pyramids, in the putrefied relicks of the general inundation. When Alexander opened the tomb of Cyrus, the remaining bones discovered his proportion, whereof urnal fragments afford but a bad conjecture, and have this disadvantage of grave interments, that they leave us ignorant of most personal discoveries. For since bones afford not only rectitude and stability but figure unto the body, it is no impossible physiognomy to conjecture at fleshy appendencies, and after what shape the muscles and carnous parts might hang in their full consistencies. A full-spread cariola[♎] shows a well-shaped horse behind; handsome formed skulls give some analogy to fleshy resemblance. A critical view of bones makes a good distinction of sexes. Even colour is not beyond conjecture, since it is hard to be deceived in the distinction of Negroes' skulls.[✕] Dante's[✱✱] characters are to be found in skulls as well as faces. Hercules is not only known by his foot. Other parts make out their comproportions and inferences upon whole or parts. And since the dimensions of the head measure the whole body, and the figure thereof gives con-

* Of Thomas, Marquis of Dorset, whose body being buried 1530, was 1608, upon the cutting open of the cerecloth, found perfect and nothing corrupted, the flesh not hardened, but in colour, proportion, and softness like an ordinary corpse newly to be interred.—Burton's Descript. of Leicestershire.

[⊕] In his map of Russia.

[♎] That part in the skeleton of a horse, which is made by the haunch-bones.

[✕] For their extraordinary thickness.

[✱✱] The poet Dante, in his view of Purgatory, found gluttons so meagre, and extenuated, that he conceited them to have been in the siege of Jerusalem, and that it was easy to have discovered Homo or Omo in their faces: M being made by the two lines of their cheeks, arching over the eye-brows to the nose, and their sunk eyes making O O which makes up Omo.

Parén l'occhiaje anella senza gemme:
Chi, nel viso degli uomini legge omo,
Bene avria quivi conosciuto l'emme.—Purgat. xxiii. 31.

jecture of the principal faculties, physiognomy outlives ourselves, and ends not in our graves.

Severe contemplators, observing these lasting relicks, may think them good monuments of persons past, little advantage to future beings; and, considering that power which subdueth all things unto itself, that can resume the scattered atoms, or identify out of any thing, conceive it superfluous to expect a resurrection out of relicks: but the soul subsisting, other matter, clothed with due accidents, may salve the individuality. Yet the saints, we observe, arose from graves and monuments about the holy city. Some think the ancient patriarchs so earnestly desired to lay their bones in Canaan, as hoping to make a part of that resurrection; and, though thirty miles from Mount Calvary, at least to lie in that region which should produce the first fruits of the dead. And if, according to learned conjecture, the bodies of men shall rise where their greatest relicks remain, many are not like to err in the topography of their resurrection, though their bones or bodies be after translated by angels into the field of Ezekiel's vision, or as some will order it, into the valley of judgment, or Jehosaphat.*

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIANS have handsomely glossed the deformity of death by careful consideration of the body, and civil rites which take off brutal terminations: and though they conceived all reparable by a resurrection, cast not off all care of interment. And since the ashes of sacrifices burnt upon the altar of God were carefully carried out by the priests, and deposed in a clean field; since they acknowledged their bodies to be the lodging of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost, they devolved not all upon the sufficiency of soul-existence; and therefore with long services and full solemnities, concluded their last exequies, wherein to all distinctions the Greek devotion seems most pathetically ceremonious.๑

Christian invention hath chiefly driven at rites, which speak hopes of another life, and hints of a resurrection. And if the ancient Gentiles held not the immortality of their better part, and some subsistence after death, in several rites, customs, actions, and expressions, they contradicted their own opinions: wherein Democritus went high, even to the thought of a resurrection, as

* Tirin. in Ezek.

๑ Rituale Græcum, operâ J. Goar, in officio exequiarum.

scoffingly recorded by Pliny.* What can be more express than the expression of Phocylides?[⊙] Or who would expect from Lucretius[⊘] a sentence of Ecclesiastes? Before Plato could speak, the soul had wings in Homer, which fell not, but flew out of the body into the mansions of the dead; who also observed that handsome distinction of Demas and Soma, for the body conjoined to the soul, and body separated from it. Lucian spoke much truth in jest, when he said that part of Hercules which proceeded from Alcmena perished, that from Jupiter remained immortal. Thus Socrates[⊠] was content that his friends should bury his body, so they would not think they buried Socrates; and, regarding only his immortal part, was indifferent to be burnt or buried. From such considerations, Diogenes might contemn sepulture, and, being satisfied that the soul could not perish, grow careless of corporal interment. The Stoicks, who thought the souls of wise men had their habitation about the moon, might make slight account of subterraneous deposition; whereas the Pythagoreans and transcorporating philosophers, who were to be often buried, held great care of their interment. And the Platonicks rejected not a due care of the grave, though they put their ashes to unreasonable expectations, in their tedious term of return and long set revolution.

Men have lost their reason in nothing so much as their religion, wherein stones and clouts make martyrs; and, since the religion of one seems madness unto another, to afford an account or rational of old rites requires no rigid reader. That they kindled the pyre aversely, or turning their face from it, was an handsome symbol of unwilling ministration. That they washed their bones with wine and milk; that the mother wrapped them in linen, and dried them in her bosom, the first fostering part and place of their nourishment; that they opened their eyes towards heaven before they kindled the fire, as the place of their hopes or original, were no improper ceremonies. Their last valediction,** thrice uttered by the attendants, was also very solemn, and somewhat answered

* Similis . . . . reviviscendi promissa Democrito vanitas, qui non revixit ipse. Quæ, malum, ista dementia est, iterari vitam morte? —Plin. l. vii. c. 58.

⊙ Καὶ τάχα δ' ἐκ γαίης ἐλπίζομεν ἐς φάος ἐλθεῖν λεῖψαν ἀποιχομένων, et deinceps.

⊘ Cedit enim retro de terrâ quod fuit ante in terram, &c.—Lucret.

⊠ Plato in Phæd.

** Vale, vale, nos te ordine quo natura permittet sequemur.

by Christians, who thought it too little, if they threw not the earth thrice upon the interred body. That, in strewing their tombs, the Romans affected the rose; the Greeks amaranthus and myrtle: that the funeral pyre consisted of sweet fuel, cypress, fir, larix, yew, and trees perpetually verdant, lay silent expressions of their surviving hopes. Wherein Christians, who deck their coffins with bays, have found a more elegant emblem; for that it, seeming dead, will restore itself from the root, and its dry and exsuccous leaves resume their verdure again; which, if we mistake not, we have also observed in furze. Whether the planting of yew in churchyards hold not its original from ancient funeral rites, or as an emblem of resurrection, from its perpetual verdure, may also admit conjecture.

They made use of musick to excite or quiet the affections of their friends, according to different harmonies. But the secret and symbolical hint was the harmonical nature of the soul; which, delivered from the body, went again to enjoy the primitive harmony of heaven, from whence it first descended; which, according to its progress traced by antiquity, came down by Cancer, and ascended by Capricornus.

They burnt not children before their teeth appeared, as apprehending their bodies too tender a morsel for fire, and that their gristly bones would scarce leave separable relicks after the pyral combustion. That they kindled not fire in their houses for some days after was a strict memorial of the late afflicting fire. And mourning without hope, they had an happy fraud against excessive lamentation, by a common opinion that deep sorrows disturbed their ghosts.*

That they buried their dead on their backs, or in a supine position, seems agreeable unto profound sleep, and common posture of dying; contrary to the most natural way of birth; nor unlike our pendulous posture, in the doubtful state of the womb. Diogenes was singular, who preferred a prone situation in the grave; and some Christians[a] like neither, who decline the figure of rest, and make choice of an erect posture.

That they carried them out of the world with their feet forward, not inconsonant unto reason, as contrary unto the native posture of man, and his production first into it; and also agreeable unto the opinions, while they bid adieu unto the world, not to look

* Tu manes ne læde meos.

[a] Russians, &c.

again upon it; whereas Mahometans who think to return to a delightful life again, are carried forth with their heads forward, and looking toward their houses.

They closed their eyes, as parts which first die, or first discover the sad effects of death. But their iterated clamations to excitate their dying or dead friends, or revoke them unto life again, was a vanity of affection; as not presumably ignorant of critical tests of death, by apposition of feathers, glasses, and reflection of figures, which dead eyes represent not: which, however not strictly verifiable in fresh and warm cadavers, could hardly elude the test, in corpses of four or five days.*

That they sucked in the last breath of their expiring friends, was surely a practice of no medical institution, but a loose opinion that the soul passed out that way, and a fondness of affection, from some Pythagorical foundation,[a] that the spirit of one body passed into another, which they wished might be their own.

That they poured oil upon the pyre, was a tolerable practice, while the intention rested in facilitating the accension. But to place good omens in the quick and speedy burning, to sacrifice unto the winds for a dispatch in this office, was a low form of superstition.

The archimime, or jester, attending the funeral train, and imitating the speeches, gesture, and manners of the deceased, was too light for such solemnities, contradicting their funeral orations and doleful rites of the grave.

That they buried a piece of money with them as a fee of the Elysian ferryman, was a practice full of folly. But the ancient custom of placing coins in considerable urns, and the present practice of burying medals in the noble foundations of Europe, are laudable ways of historical discoveries, in actions, persons, chronologies; and posterity will applaud them.

We examine not the old laws of sepulture, exempting certain persons from burial or burning. But hereby we apprehend that these were not the bones of persons planet-struck or burnt with fire from heaven; no relicks of traitors to their country, self-killers, or sacrilegious malefactors; persons in old apprehension unworthy of the earth; condemned unto the Tartarus of hell, and bottomless pit of Pluto, from whence there was no redemption.

Nor were only many customs questionable in order to their ob-

* At least by some difference from living eyes.

[a] Francesco Perucci, Pompe funebri.

sequies, but also sundry practices, fictions, and conceptions, discordant or obscure, of their state and future beings; whether unto eight or ten bodies of men to add one of a woman, as being more inflammable, and unctuously constituted for the better pyral combustion, were any rational practice; or whether the complaint of Periander's wife be tolerable, that wanting her funeral burning, she suffered intolerable cold in hell, according to the constitution of the infernal house of Pluto, wherein cold makes a great part of their tortures; it cannot pass without some question. Why the female ghosts appear unto Ulysses, before the heroes and masculine spirits,—why the Psyche or soul of Tiresias is of the masculine gender,* who, being blind on earth, sees more than all the rest in hell; why the funeral suppers consisted of eggs, beans, smallage, and lettuce, since the dead are made to eat asphodels[¶] about the Elysian meadows,—why, since there is no sacrifice acceptable, nor any propitiation for the covenant of the grave, men set up the deity of Morta, and fruitlessly adored divinities without ears, it cannot escape some doubt.

The dead seem all alive in the human Hades of Homer, yet cannot well speak, prophesy, or know the living, except they drink blood, wherein is the life of man. And therefore the souls of Penelope's paramours, conducted by Mercury, chirped like bats, and those which followed Hercules, made a noise but like a flock of birds.

The departed spirits know things past and to come; yet are ignorant of things present. Agamemnon foretells what should happen unto Ulysses; yet ignorantly enquires what is become of his own son. The ghosts are afraid of swords in Homer; yet Sibylla tells Æneas in Virgil, the thin habit of spirits was beyond the force of weapons. The spirits put off their malice with their bodies, and Cæsar and Pompey accord in Latin hell; yet Ajax, in Homer, endures not a conference with Ulysses: and Deiphobus appears all mangled in Virgil's ghosts, yet we meet with perfect shadows among the wounded ghosts of Homer.

Since Charon in Lucian applauds his condition among the dead, whether it be handsomely said of Achilles, that living contemner of death, that he had rather be a ploughman's servant, than emperor of the dead? How Hercules his soul is in hell, and yet in heaven; and Julius his soul in a star, yet seen by Æneas in hell?

* In Homer:—Ψυχὴ Θηβαίου Τειρεσίαο σκῆπτρον ἔχων.

¶ In Lucian.

—except the ghosts were but images and shadows of the soul, received in higher mansions, according to the ancient division of body, soul, and image, or simulacrum of them both. The particulars of future beings must needs be dark unto ancient theories, which Christian philosophy yet determines but in a cloud of opinions. A dialogue between two infants in the womb concerning the state of this world, might handsomely illlustrate our ignorance of the next, whereof methinks we yet discourse in Plato's den, and are but embryo philosophers.

Pythagoras escapes in the fabulous hell of Dante,* among that swarm of philosophers, wherein, whilst we meet with Plato and Socrates, Cato is to be found in no lower place than purgatory. Among all the set, Epicurus is most considerable, whom men make honest without an Elysium, who contemned life without encouragement of immortality, and making nothing after death, yet made nothing of the king of terrors.

Were the happiness of the next world as closely apprehended as the felicities of this, it were a martyrdom to live; and unto such as consider none hereafter, it must be more than death to die, which makes us amazed at those audacities that durst be nothing and return into their chaos again. Certainly such spirits as could contemn death, when they expected no better being after, would have scorned to live, had they known any. And therefore we applaud not the judgment of Machiavel, that Christianity makes men cowards, or that with the confidence of but half-dying, the despised virtues of patience and humility have abased the spirits of men, which Pagan principles exalted; but rather regulated the wildness of audacities, in the attempts, grounds, and eternal sequels of death; wherein men of the boldest spirits are often prodigiously temerarious. Nor can we extenuate the valour of ancient martyrs who contemned death in the uncomfortable scene of their lives, and in their decrepit martyrdoms did probably lose not many months of their days, or parted with life when it was scarce worth the living. For (beside that long time past holds no consideration unto a slender time to come) they had no small disadvantage from the constitution of old age, which naturally makes men fearful, and complexionally superannuated from the bold and courageous thoughts of youth and fervent years. But the contempt of death from corporal animosity, promoteth not our felicity. They may sit in the orchestra, and noblest

* Del Inferno, cant. 4.

seats of heaven, who have held up shaking hands in the fire, and humanly contended for glory.

Meanwhile Epicurus lies deep in Dante's hell, wherein we meet with tombs enclosing souls which denied their immortalities. But whether the virtuous heathen, who lived better than he spake, or erring in the principles of himself, yet lived above philosophers of more specious maxims, lie so deep as he is placed, at least so low as not to rise against Christians, who believing or knowing that truth, have lastingly denied it in their practice and conversation—were a query too sad to insist on.

But all or most apprehensions rested in opinions of some future being, which, ignorantly or coldly believed, begat those perverted conceptions, ceremonies, sayings, which Christians pity or laugh at. Happy are they which live not in that disadvantage of time, when men could say little for futurity, but from reason: whereby the noblest minds fell often upon doubtful deaths, and melancholy dissolutions. With these hopes, Socrates warmed his doubtful spirits against that cold potion; and Cato, before he durst give the fatal stroke, spent part of the night in reading the Immortality of Plato, thereby confirming his wavering hand unto the animosity of that attempt.

It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him he is at the end of his nature; or that there is no further state to come, unto which this seems progressional, and otherwise made in vain. Without this accomplishment, the natural expectation and desire of such a state were but a fallacy in nature; unsatisfied considerators would quarrel the justice of their constitutions, and rest content that Adam had fallen lower; whereby, by knowing no other original, and deeper ignorance of themselves, they might have enjoyed the happiness of inferior creatures, who in tranquillity possess their constitutions, as having not the apprehension to deplore their own natures, and, being framed below the circumference of these hopes, or cognition of better being, the wisdom of God hath necessitated their contentment: but the superior ingredient and obscured part of ourselves, whereto all present felicities afford no resting contentment, will be able at last to tell us, we are more than our present selves and evacuate such hopes in the fruition of their own accomplishments.

CHAPTER V.

NOW since these dead bones have already out-lasted the living ones of Methuselah, and in a yard under ground, and thin walls

of clay, out-worn all the strong and specious buildings above it; and quietly rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests: what prince can promise such diuturnity unto his relicks, or might not gladly say,
Sic ego componi versus in ossa velim?*
Time, which antiquates antiquities, and hath an art to make dust of all things, hath yet spared these minor monuments.
In vain we hope to be known by open and visible conservatories, when to be unknown was the means of their continuation, and obscurity their protection. If they died by violent hands, and were thrust into their urns, these bones become considerable, and some old philosophers would honour them,[9] whose souls they conceived most pure, which were thus snatched from their bodies, and to retain a stronger propension unto them; whereas they weariedly left a languishing corpse, and with faint desires of reunion. If they fell by long and aged decay, yet wrapt up in the bundle of time, they fall into indistinction, and make but one blot with infants. If we begin to die when we live, and long life be but a prolongation of death, our life is a sad composition; we live with death, and die not in a moment. How many pulses made up the life of Methuselah, were work for Archimedes: common counters sum up the life of Moses his man.[ϖ] Our days become considerable, like petty sums, by minute accumulations; where numerous fractions make up but small round numbers; and our days of a span long, make not one little finger.[ϰ]
If the nearness of our last necessity brought a nearer conformity unto it, there were a happiness in hoary hairs, and no calamity in half-senses. But the long habit of living indisposeth us for dying; when avarice makes us the sport of death, when even David grew politickly cruel, and Solomon could hardly be said to be the wisest of men. But many are too early old, and before the date of age. Adversity stretcheth our days, misery makes Alcmena's nights,** and time hath no wings unto it. But the most tedious

* Tibullus.
[9] Oracula Chaldaica cum scholiis Pselli et Phethonis. Βίῃ λιπόντων σῶμα ψυχαὶ καθαρώταται. Vi corpus relinquentium animæ purissimæ.
[ϖ] In the Psalm of Moses.
[ϰ] According to the ancient arithmetick of the hand, wherein the little finger of the right hand contracted, signified an hundred.—Pierius in Hieroglyph.
** One night as long as three.

being is that which can unwish itself, content to be nothing, or never to have been, which was beyond the malcontent of Job, who cursed not the day of his life, but his nativity; content to have so far been, as to have a title to future being, although he had lived here but in an hidden state of life, and as it were an abortion.

What song the Syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions,[*] are not beyond all conjecture. What time the persons of these ossuaries entered the famous nations of the dead,[๑] and slept with princes and counsellors, might admit a wide solution. But who were the proprietaries of these bones, or what bodies these ashes made up, were a question above antiquarism; not to be resolved by man, nor easily perhaps by spirits, except we consult the provincial guardians, or tutelary observators. Had they made as good provision for their names, as they have done for their relicks, they had not so grossly erred in the art of perpetuation. But to subsist in bones, and be but pyramidally extant, is a fallacy in duration. Vain ashes which in the oblivion of names, persons, times, and sexes, have found unto themselves a fruitless continuation, and only arise unto late posterity, as emblems of mortal vanities, antidotes against pride, vain-glory, and madding vices. Pagan vain-glories which thought the world might last for ever, had encouragement for ambition; and, finding no Atropos unto the immortality of their names, were never dampt with the necessity of oblivion. Even old ambitions had the advantage of ours, in the attempts of their vain-glories, who acting early, and before the probable meridian of time, have by this time found great accomplishment of their designs, whereby the ancient heroes have already outlasted their monuments, and mechanical preservations. But in this latter scene of time, we cannot expect such mummies unto our memories, when ambition may fear the prophecy of Elias,[ٯ] and Charles the Fifth can never hope to live within two Methuselahs of Hector.[ж]

And therefore, restless inquietude for the diuturnity of our memo-

[*] The puzzling questions of Tiberius unto grammarians.—Marcel. Donatus in Suet.

[๑] Κλυτὰ ἔθνεα νεκρῶν.—Hom. Job.

[ٯ] That the world may last but six thousand years.

[ж] Hector's fame lasting above two lives of Methuselah, before that famous prince was extant.

ries unto present considerations seems a vanity almost out of date, and superannuated piece of folly. We cannot hope to live so long in our names, as some have done in their persons. One face of Janus holds no proportion unto the other. 'Tis too late to be ambitious. The great mutations of the world are acted, or time may be too short for our designs. To extend our memories by monuments, whose death we daily pray for, and whose duration we cannot hope, without injury to our expectations in the advent of the last day, were a contradiction to our beliefs. We whose generations are ordained in this setting part of time, are providentially taken off from such imaginations; and, being necessitated to eye the remaining particle of futurity, are naturally constituted unto thoughts of the next world, and cannot excusably decline the consideration of that duration, which maketh pyramids pillars of snow, and all that's past a moment.

Circles and right lines limit and close all bodies, and the mortal right-lined circle* must conclude and shut up all. There is no antidote against the opium of time, which temporally considereth all things: our fathers find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors. Gravestones tell truth scarce forty years.[9] Generations pass while some trees stand, and old families last not three oaks. To be read by bare inscriptions like many in Gruter,[a] to hope for eternity by enigmatical epithets or first letters of our names, to be studied by antiquaries, who we were, and have new names given us like many of the mummies,[x] are cold consolations unto the students of perpetuity, even by everlasting languages.

To be content that times to come should only know there was such a man, not caring whether they knew more of him, was a frigid ambition in Cardan;** disparaging his horoscopal inclination and judgment of himself. Who cares to subsist like Hippocrates' patients, or Achilles' horses in Homer, under naked nominations, without deserts and noble acts, which are the bal-

* The character of death.

[9] Old ones being taken up, and other bodies laid under them.

[a] Gruteri Inscriptiones Antiquæ.

[x] Which men show in several countries, giving them what names they please; and unto some the names of the old Egyptian kings, out of Herodotus.

** Cuperem notum esse quod sim, non opto ut sciatur qualis sim.—Card. in vita propria.

sam of our memories, the entelechia and soul of our subsistences? To be nameless in worthy deeds, exceeds an infamous history. The Canaanitish woman lives more happily without a name, than Herodias with one. And who had not rather have been the good thief, than Pilate?

But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the pyramids? Herostratus lives that burnt the temple of Diana, he is almost lost that built it. Time hath spared the epitaph of Adrian's horse, confounded that of himself. In vain we compute our felicities by the advantage of our good names, since bad have equal durations, and Thersites is like to live as long as Agamemnon. Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot, than any that stand remembered in the known account of time? Without the favour of the everlasting register, the first man had been as unknown as the last, and Methuselah's long life had been his only chronicle.

Oblivion is not to be hired. The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story before the flood, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living century. The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto that current arithmetick, which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the Lucina of life, and even Pagans* could doubt, whether thus to live were to die; since our longest sun sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darkness, and have our light in ashes;[9] since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying mementos, and time that grows old in itself, bids us hope no long duration;—diuturnity is a dream and folly of expectation.[a]

* Euripides.

[9] According to the custom of the Jews, who place a lighted wax-candle in a pot of ashes by the corpse.—Leo.

[a] Cf. MS. Sloan. 1848, fol. 194. "Large are the treasures of oblivion, and heaps of things in a state next to nothing almost numberless; much more is buried in silence than recorded, and the largest volumes are but epitomes of what hath been. The

Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living beings; we slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves. To weep into stones are fables. Afflictions induce callosities; miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us, which notwithstanding is no unhappy stupidity. To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision in nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil days, and, our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances, our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetitions. A great part of antiquity contented their hopes of subsistency with a transmigration of their souls,—a good way to continue their memories, while having the advantage of plural successions, they could not but act something remarkable in such variety of beings, and enjoying the fame of their passed selves, make accumulation of glory unto their last durations. Others, rather than be lost in the uncomfortable night of nothing, were content to recede into the common being, and make one particle of the public soul of all things, which was no more than to return into their unknown and divine original again. Egyptian ingenuity was more unsatisfied, contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies, to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity,* feeding the wind, and folly. The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams.

account of time began with night, and darkness still attendeth it. Some things never come to light; many have been delivered; but more hath been swallowed in obscurity and the caverns of oblivion. How much is as it were in vacuo, and will never be cleared up, of those long living times when men could scarce remember themselves young; and men seem to us not ancient but antiquities, when they (lived) longer in their lives than we can now hope to do in our memories; when men feared not apoplexies and palsies after seven or eight hundred years; when living was so lasting that homicide might admit of distinctive qualifications from the age of the person, and it might seem a lesser injury to kill a man at eight hundred than at forty, and when life was so well worth the living that few or none would kill themselves."

* Omnia vanitas et pastio venti, *νομὴ ἀνέμου καὶ βόσκησις*, ut olim Aquila et Symmachus. v. Drus. Eccles.

In vain do individuals hope for immortality, or any patent from oblivion, in preservations below the moon; men have been deceived even in their flatteries, above the sun, and studied conceits to perpetuate their names in heaven. The various cosmography of that part hath already varied the names of contrived constellations; Nimrod is lost in Orion, and Osyris in the Dog-star. While we look for incorruption in the heavens, we find they are but like the earth;—durable in their main bodies, alterable in their parts; whereof, beside comets and new stars, perspectives begin to tell tales. And the spots that wander about the sun, with Phaeton's favour, would make clear conviction.

There is nothing strictly immortal, but immortality. Whatever hath no beginning, may be confident of no end;—which is the peculiar of that necessary essence that cannot destroy itself;—and the highest strain of omnipotency, to be so powerfully constituted as not to suffer even from the power of itself: all others have a dependent being and within the reach of destruction. But the sufficiency of Christian immortality frustrates all earthly glory, and the quality of either state after death, makes a folly of posthumous memory. God who can only destroy our souls, and hath assured our resurrection, either of our bodies or names hath directly promised no duration. Wherein there is so much of chance, that the boldest expectants have found unhappy frustration; and to hold long subsistence seems but a scape in oblivion. But man is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave, solemnizing nativities and deaths with equal lustre, nor omitting ceremonies of bravery in the infamy of his nature.

Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us. A small fire sufficeth for life, great flames seemed too little after death, while men vainly affected precious pyres, and to burn like Sardanapalus; but the wisdom of funeral laws found the folly of prodigal blazes, and reduced undoing fires unto the rule of sober obsequies, wherein few could be so mean as not to provide wood, pitch, a mourner, and an urn.*

* According to the epitaph of Rufus and Beronica, in Gruterus.

nec ex
Eorum bonis plus inventum est, quam
Quod sufficeret ad emendam pyram
Et picem quibus corpora cremarentur,
Et præfica conducta, et olla empta.

Five languages secured not the epitaph of Gordianus.[*] The man of God lives longer without a tomb than any by one, invisibly interred by angels, and adjudged to obscurity, though not without some marks directing human discovery. Enoch and Elias, without either tomb or burial, in an anomalous state of being, are the great examples of perpetuity, in their long and living memory, in strict account being still on this side death, and having a late part yet to act upon this stage of earth. If in the decretory term of the world we shall not all die but be changed, according to received translation, the last day will make but few graves; at least quick resurrections will anticipate lasting sepultures. Some graves will be opened before they be quite closed, and Lazarus be no wonder. When many that feared to die, shall groan that they can die but once, the dismal state is the second and living death, when life puts despair on the damned; when men shall wish the coverings of mountains, not of monuments, and annihilations shall be courted.

While some have studied monuments, others have studiously declined them, and some have been so vainly boisterous, that they durst not acknowledge their graves; wherein Alaricus[⁂] seems most subtle, who had a river turned to hide his bones at the bottom. Even Sylla, that thought himself safe in his urn, could not prevent revenging tongues, and stones thrown at his monument. Happy are they whom privacy makes innocent, who deal so with men in this world, that they are not afraid to meet them in the next; who, when they die, make no commotion among the dead, and are not touched with that poetical taunt of Isaiah.[⁂]

Pyramids, arches, obelisks, were but the irregularities of vainglory, and wild enormities of ancient magnanimity. But the most magnanimous resolution rests in the Christian religion, which trampleth upon pride, and sits on the neck of ambition, humbly pursuing that infallible perpetuity, unto which all others must diminish their diameters, and be poorly seen in angles of contingency.[⁂]

Pious spirits who passed their days in raptures of futurity, made

[*] In Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Egyptian, Arabic; defaced by Licinius the emperor.

[⁂] Jornandes de rebus Geticis.

[⁂] Isa. xiv. 16, &c.

[⁂] Angulus contingentiæ, the least of angles

little more of this world, than the world that was before it, while they lay obscure in the chaos of pre-ordination, and night of their fore-beings. And if any have been so happy as truly to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasies, exolution, liquefaction, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, gustation of God, and ingression into the divine shadow, they have already had an handsome anticipation of heaven; the glory of the world is surely over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

To subsist in lasting monuments, to live in their productions, to exist in their names and predicament of chimeras, was large satisfaction unto old expectations, and made one part of their Elysiums. But all this is nothing in the metaphysicks of true belief. To live indeed, is to be again ourselves, which being not only an hope, but an evidence in noble believers, 'tis all one to lie in St. Innocent's* churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt. Ready to be anything, in the ecstasy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the moles of Adrianus.[a]

—tabesne cadavera solvat,
An rogus, haud refert.—Lucan.

* In Paris, where bodies soon consume.

[a] A stately mausoleum or sepulchral pile, built by Adrianus in Rome, where now standeth the castle of St. Angelo.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND, UPON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF HIS INTIMATE FRIEND.

GIVE me leave to wonder that news of this nature should have such heavy wings that you should hear so little concerning your dearest friend, and that I must make that unwilling repetition to tell you, ad portam rigidos calces extendit, that he is dead and buried, and by this time no puny among the mighty nations of the dead; for though he left this world not very many days past, yet every hour you know largely addeth unto that dark society; and considering the incessant mortality of mankind, you cannot conceive there dieth in the whole earth so few as a thousand an hour.

Although at this distance you had no early account or particular of his death, yet your affection may cease to wonder that you had not some secret sense or intimation thereof by dreams, thoughtful whisperings, mercurisms, airy nuncios or sympathetical insinuations, which many seem to have had at the death of their dearest friends: for since we find in that famous story, that spirits themselves were fain to tell their fellows at a distance that the great Antonio was dead, we have a sufficient excuse for our ignorance in such particulars, and must rest content with the common road, and Appian way of knowledge by information. Though the uncertainty of the end of this world hath confounded all human predictions; yet they who shall live to see the sun and moon darkened and the stars to fall from heaven, will hardly be deceived in the advent of the last day; and therefore strange it is, that the common fallacy of consumptive persons who feel not themselves dying, and therefore still hope to live, should also reach their friends in perfect health and judgment;—that you should be so little acquainted with Plautus' sick complexion, or that almost an Hippocratical face should not alarum you to higher fears, or rather despair, of his continuation in such an emaciated state, wherein medical predictions fail not, as sometimes in acute diseases, and wherein 'tis as dangerous to be sentenced by a physician as a judge.

Upon my first visit I was bold to tell them who had not let fall all hopes of his recovery, that in my sad opinion he was not like to behold a grasshopper, much less to pluck another fig; and in no long time after seemed to discover that odd mortal symptom in him not mentioned by Hippocrates, that is, to lose his own face, and look like some of his near relations; for he maintained not his proper countenance, but looked like his uncle, the lines of whose face lay deep and invisible in his healthful visage before: for as from our beginning we run through variety of looks,

before we come to consistent and settled faces; so before our end, by sick and languishing alterations, we put on new visages: and in our retreat to earth, may fall upon such looks which from community of seminal originals were before latent in us.

He was fruitlessly put in hope of advantage by change of air, and imbibing the pure aerial nitre of these parts; and therefore, being so far spent, he quickly found Sardinia in Tivoli, and the most healthful air of little effect, where death had set his broad arrow; for he lived not unto the middle of May, and confirmed the observation of Hippocrates of that mortal time of the year when the leaves of the fig-tree resemble a daw's claw. He is happily seated who lives in places whose air, earth, and water, promote not the infirmities of his weaker parts, or is early removed into regions that correct them. He that is tabidly inclined, were unwise to pass his days in Portugal: cholical persons will find little comfort in Austria or Vienna: he that is weak-legged must not be in love with Rome, nor an infirm head with Venice or Paris. Death hath not only particular stars in heaven, but malevolent places on earth, which single out our infirmities, and strike at our weaker parts; in which concern, passager and migrant birds have the great advantages; who are naturally constituted for distant habitations, whom no seas nor places limit, but in their appointed seasons will visit us from Greenland and Mount Atlas, and as some think, even from the Antipodes.

Though we could not have his life, yet we missed not our desires in his soft departure, which was scarce an expiration; and his end not unlike his beginning, when the salient point scarce affords a sensible motion, and his departure so like unto sleep, that he scarce needed the civil ceremony of closing his eyes; contrary unto the common way, wherein death draws up, sleep lets fall the eyelids. With what strife and pains we came into the world we know not; but 'tis commonly no easy matter to get out of it: yet if it could be made out, that such who have easy nativities have commonly hard deaths, and contrarily; his departure was so easy, that we might justly suspect his birth was of another nature, and that some Juno sat cross-legged at his nativity.

Besides his soft death, the incurable state of his disease might somewhat extenuate your sorrow, who know that monsters but seldom happen, miracles more rarely in physic. Angelus Victorius gives a serious account of a consumptive, hectical, phthisical woman, who was suddenly cured by the intercession of Ignatius. We read not of any in scripture who in this case applied

unto our Saviour, though some may be contained in that large expression, that He went about Galilee healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases. Amulets, spells, sigils, and incantations, practised in other diseases, are seldom pretended in this; and we find no sigil in the Archidoxis of Paracelsus to cure an extreme consumption or marasmus, which, if other diseases fail, will put a period unto long livers, and at last makes dust of all. And therefore the Stoics could not but think that the fiery principle would wear out all the rest, and at last make an end of the world, which notwithstanding without such a lingering period the Creator may effect at His pleasure: and to make an end of all things on earth, and our planetical system of the world, He need but put out the sun.

I was not so curious to entitle the stars unto any concern of his death, yet could not but take notice that he died when the moon was in motion from the meridian; at which time an old Italian long ago would persuade me that the greatest part of men died: but herein I confess I could never satisfy my curiosity; although from the time of tides in places upon or near the sea, there may be considerable deductions; and Pliny hath an odd and remarkable passage concerning the death of men and animals upon the recess or ebb of the sea. However, certain it is, he died in the dead and deep part of the night, when Nox might be most apprehensibly said to be the daughter of Chaos, the mother of sleep and death according to old genealogy; and so went out of this world about that hour when our blessed Saviour entered it, and about what time many conceive He will return again unto it. Cardan hath a peculiar and no hard observation from a man's hand to know whether he was born in the day or night, which I confess holdeth in my own. And Scaliger to that purpose hath another from the tip of the ear: most men are begotten in the night, animals in the day; but whether more persons have been born in the night or the day, were a curiosity undecidable, though more have perished by violent deaths in the day; yet in natural dissolutions both times may hold an indifferency, at least but contingent inequality. The whole course of time runs out in the nativity and death of things; which whether they happen by succession or coincidence, are best computed by the natural not artificial day.

That Charles the Fifth was crowned upon the day of his nativity, it being in his own power so to order it, makes no singular animadversion; but that he should also take King Francis prisoner

upon that day, was an unexpected coincidence, which made the same remarkable. Antipater, who had an anniversary feast every year upon his birth-day, needed no astrological revolution to know what day he should die on. When the fixed stars have made a revolution unto the points from whence they first set out, some of the ancients thought the world would have an end; which was a kind of dying upon the day of his nativity. Now the disease prevailing and swiftly advancing about the time of his nativity, some were of opinion that he would leave the world on the day he entered into it: but this being a lingering disease, and creeping softly on, nothing critical was found or expected, and he died not before fifteen days after. Nothing is more common with infants than to die on the day of their nativity, to behold the worldly hours, and but the fractions thereof; and even to perish before their nativity in the hidden world of the womb, and before their good angel is conceived to undertake them. But in persons who out-live many years, and when there are no less than three hundred and sixty-five days to determine their lives in every year; that the first day should make the last, that the tail of the snake should return into its mouth precisely at that time, and they should wind up upon the day of their nativity, is indeed a remarkable coincidence, which, though astrology hath taken witty pains to salve, yet hath it been very wary in making predictions of it.

In this consumptive condition and remarkable extenuation, he came to be almost half himself, and left a great part behind him, which he carried not to the grave. And though that story of Duke John Ernestus Mansfield be not so easily swallowed, that at his death his heart was found not to be so big as a nut; yet if the bones of a good skeleton weigh little more than twenty pounds, his inwards and flesh remaining could make no bouffage, but a light bit for the grave. I never more lively beheld the starved characters of Dante in any living face; an aruspex might have read a lecture upon him without exenteration, his flesh being so consumed, that he might, in a manner, have discerned his bowels without opening of him: so that to be carried, sextâ cervice, to the grave, was but a civil unnecessity; and the complements of the coffin might outweigh the subject of it.

Omnibonus Ferrarius in mortal dysenteries of children looks for a spot behind the ear: in consumptive diseases some eye the complexion of moles; Cardan eagerly views the nails, some the lines of the hand, the thenar or muscle of the thumb; some are

so curious as to observe the depth of the throat-pit, how the proportion varieth of the small of the legs unto the calf, or the compass of the neck unto the circumference of the head: but all these, with many more, were so drowned in a mortal visage, and last face of Hippocrates, that a weak physiognomist might say at first eye, this was a face of earth, and that Morta had set her hard seal upon his temples, easily perceiving what caricatura draughts death makes upon pined faces, and unto what an unknown degree a man may live backward.

Though the beard be only made a distinction of sex, and sign of masculine heat by Ulmus, yet the precocity and early growth thereof in him, was not to be liked in reference unto long life. Lewis, that virtuous but unfortunate king of Hungary, who lost his life at the battle of Mohacz, was said to be born without a skin, to have bearded at fifteen, and to have shown some grey hairs about twenty; from whence the diviners conjectured that he would be spoiled of his kingdom, and have but a short life: but hairs make fallible predictions, and many temples early grey have outlived the psalmist's period. Hairs which have most amused me have not been in the face or head, but on the back, and not in men but children, as I long ago observed in that endemial distemper of little children in Languedoc, called the morgellons, wherein they critically break out with harsh hairs on their backs, which takes off the unquiet symptoms of the disease, and delivers them from coughs and convulsions.*

The Egyptian mummies that I have seen, have had their mouths open, and somewhat gaping, which affordeth a good opportunity to view and observe their teeth, wherein 'tis not easy to find any wanting or decayed; and therefore in Egypt, where one man practised but one operation, or the diseases but of single parts, it must needs be a barren profession to confine unto that of draw-

* Cf. MS. Sloan. 1862:—"Though hairs afford but fallible conjectures, yet we cannot but take notice of them. They grow not equally on bodies after death: women's skulls afford moss as well as men's, and the best I have seen was upon a woman's skull, taken up and laid in a room after twenty-five years' burial. Though the skin be made the place of hairs, yet sometimes they are found on the heart and inward parts. The plica or gluey locks happen unto both sexes, and being cut off will come again: but they are wary of cutting off the same, for fear of head-ache and other diseases."

ing of teeth, and little better than to have been tooth-drawer unto King Pyrrhus, who had but two in his head. How the banyans of India maintain the integrity of those parts, I find not particularly observed; who notwithstanding have an advantage of their preservation by abstaining from all flesh, and employing their teeth in such food unto which they may seem at first framed, from their figure and conformation: but sharp and corroding rheums had so early mouldered those rocks and hardest parts of his fabric, that a man might well conceive that his years were never like to double or twice tell over his teeth. Corruption had dealt more severely with them than sepulchral fires and smart flames with those of burnt bodies of old; for in the burnt fragments of urns which I have enquired into, although I seem to find few incisors or shearers, yet the dog teeth and grinders do notably resist those fires.*

* Cf. MS. Sloan. 1862:—"Affection had so blinded some of his nearest relations, as to retain some hope of a postliminious life, and that he might come to life again, and therefore would not have him coffined before the third day. Some such virbiasses, I confess, we find in story, and one or two I remember myself, but they lived not long after. Some contingent reanimations are to be hoped in diseases wherein the lamp of life is but puffed out and seemingly choaked, and not where the oil is quite spent and exhausted. Though Nonnus will have it a fever, yet of what diseases Lazarus first died, is uncertain from the text, as his second death from good authentic history; but since some persons conceived to be dead do sometimes return again unto evidence of life, that miracle was wisely managed by our Saviour; for had he not been dead four days and under corruption, there had not wanted enough who would have cavilled the same, which the scripture now puts out of doubt: and tradition also confirmeth that he lived thirty years after, and being pursued by the Jews, came by sea into Provence, by Marseilles, with Mary Magdalen, Maximinus, and others; where remarkable places carry their names unto this day. But to arise from the grave to return again into it, is but an uncomfortable reviction. Few men would be content to cradle it once again; except a man can lead his second life better than the first, a man may be doubly condemned for living evilly twice, which were but to make the second death in scripture the third, and to accumulate in the punishment of two bad livers at the last day. To have performed the duty of corruption in the grave, to live again

In the years of his childhood he had languished under the disease of his country, the rickets; after which, notwithstanding, many have become strong and active men; but whether any have attained unto very great years, the disease is scarce so old as to afford good observation. Whether the children of the English plantations be subject unto the same infirmity, may be worth the observing. Whether lameness and halting do still increase among the inhabitants of Rovigno in Istria, I know not; yet scarce twenty years ago Monsieur du Loyr observed that a third part of that people halted: but too certain it is that the rickets increaseth among us; the small-pox grows more pernicious than the great: the king's purse knows that the king's evil grows more common. Quartan agues are become no strangers in Ireland; more common and mortal in England: and though the ancients gave that disease very good words, yet now that bell makes no strange sound which rings out for the effect thereof.*
Some think there were few consumptions in the old world, when men lived much upon milk; and that the ancient inhabitants of this island were less troubled with coughs when they went naked and slept in caves and woods, than men now in chambers and featherbeds. Plato will tell us, that there was no such disease as a catarrh in Homer's time, and that it was but new in Greece in his age. Polydore Virgil delivereth that pleurisies were rare in England, who lived but in the days of Henry the Eighth. Some will allow no diseases to be new, others think that many old ones are ceased: and that such which are esteemed new, will have but their time: however, the mercy of God hath scattered the great heap of diseases, and not loaded any one country with all: some may be new in one country which have been old in another.

as far from sin as death, and arise like our Saviour for ever, are the only satisfactions of well-weighed expectations."

* MS. Sloan. 1862 adds:—"Some I observed to wonder how, in his consumptive state, his hair held on so well, without that considerable defluvium which is one of the last symptoms in such diseases; but they took not notice of a mark in his face, which if he had lived was a probable security against baldness (if the observation of Aristotle will hold, that persons are less apt to be bald who are double-chinned), nor of the various and knotted veins in his legs, which they that have, in the same author's assertions, are less disposed to baldness. (According as Theodorus Gaza renders it: though Scaliger renders the text otherwise.)"

New discoveries of the earth discover new diseases: for besides the common swarm, there are endemial and local infirmities proper unto certain regions, which in the whole earth make no small number: and if Asia, Africa, and America, should bring in their list, Pandora's box would swell, and there must be a strange pathology.

Most men expected to find a consumed kell, empty and bladder-like guts, livid and marbled lungs, and a withered pericardium in this exsuccous corpse: but some seemed too much to wonder that two lobes of his lungs adhered unto his side; for the like I have often found in bodies of no suspected consumptions or difficulty of respiration. And the same more often happeneth in men than other animals: and some think in women than in men: but the most remarkable I have met with, was in a man, after a cough of almost fifty years, in whom all the lobes adhered unto the pleura, and each lobe unto another; who having also been much troubled with the gout, brake the rule of Cardan, and died of the stone in the bladder. Aristotle makes a query, why some animals cough, as man; some not, as oxen. If coughing be taken as it consisteth of a natural and voluntary motion, including expectoration and spitting out, it may be as proper unto man as bleeding at the nose; otherwise we find that Vegetius and rural writers have not left so many medicines in vain against the coughs of cattle; and men who perish by coughs die the death of sheep, cats, and lions: and though birds have no midriff, yet we meet with divers remedies in Arrianus against the coughs of hawks. And though it might be thought that all animals who have lungs do cough; yet in cetaceous fishes, who have large and strong lungs, the same is not observed; nor yet in oviparous quadrupeds: and in the greatest thereof, the crocodile, although we read much of their tears, we find nothing of that motion.

From the thoughts of sleep, when the soul was conceived nearest unto divinity, the ancients erected an art of divination, wherein while they too widely expatiated in loose and inconsequent conjectures, Hippocrates wisely considered dreams as they presaged alterations in the body, and so afforded hints toward the preservation of health, and prevention of diseases; and therein was so serious as to advise alteration of diet, exercise, sweating, bathing, and vomiting; and also so religious as to order prayers and supplications unto respective deities, in good dreams unto Sol, Jupiter cœlestis, Jupiter opulentus, Minerva, Mercurius, and Apollo; in bad unto Tellus and the heroes.

And therefore I could not but take notice how his female friends were irrationally curious so strictly to examine his dreams, and in this low state to hope for the phantasms of health. He was now past the healthful dreams of the sun, moon, and stars, in their clarity and proper courses. 'Twas too late to dream of flying, of limpid fountains, smooth waters, white vestments, and fruitful green trees, which are the visions of healthful sleeps, and at good distance from the grave.

And they were also too deeply dejected that he should dream of his dead friends, inconsequently divining, that he would not be long from them; for strange it was not that he should sometimes dream of the dead, whose thoughts run always upon death; beside, to dream of the dead, so they appear not in dark habits, and take nothing away from us, in Hippocrates' sense was of good signification: for we live by the dead, and every thing is or must be so before it becomes our nourishment. And Cardan, who dreamed that he discoursed with his dead father in the moon, made thereof no mortal interpretation: and even to dream that we are dead, was no condemnable phantasm in old oneiro-criticism, as having a signification of liberty, vacuity from cares, exemption and freedom from troubles unknown unto the dead.

Some dreams I confess may admit of easy and feminine exposition; he who dreamed that he could not see his right shoulder, might easily fear to lose the sight of his right eye; he that before a journey dreamed that his feet were cut off, had a plain warning not to undertake his intended journey. But why to dream of lettuce should presage some ensuing disease, why to eat figs should signify foolish talk, why to eat eggs great trouble, and to dream of blindness should be so highly commended, according to the oneirocritical verses of Astrampsychus and Nicephorus, I shall leave unto your divination.

He was willing to quit the world alone and altogether, leaving no earnest behind him for corruption or after-grave, having small content in that common satisfaction to survive or live in another, but amply satisfied that his disease should die with himself, nor revive in a posterity to puzzle physic, and make sad mementos of their parent hereditary. Leprosy awakes not sometimes before forty, the gout and stone often later; but consumptive and tabid roots sprout more early, and at the fairest make seventeen years of our life doubtful before that age. They that enter the world with original diseases as well as sin, have not only common mortality but sick traductions to destroy them, make commonly short

courses, and live not at length but in figures; so that a sound Cæsarean nativity may out-last a natural birth, and a knife may sometimes make way for a more lasting fruit than a midwife; which makes so few infants now able to endure the old test of the river, and many to have feeble children who could scarce have been married at Sparta, and those provident states who studied strong and healthful generations; which happen but contingently in mere pecuniary matches or marriages made by the candle, wherein notwithstanding there is little redress to be hoped from an astrologer or a lawyer, and a good discerning physician were like to prove the most successful counsellor.

Julius Scaliger, who in a sleepless fit of the gout could make two hundred verses in a night, would have but five plain words upon his tomb. And this serious person, though no minor wit, left the poetry of his epitaph unto others: either unwilling to commend himself or to be judged by a distich, and perhaps considering how unhappy great poets have been in versifying their own epitaphs: wherein Petrarca, Dante, and Ariosto, have so unhappily failed, that if their tombs should out-last their works, posterity would find so little of Apollo on them, as to mistake them for Ciceronian poets.

In this deliberate and creeping progress unto the grave, he was somewhat too young and of too noble a mind, to fall upon that stupid symptom observable in divers persons near their journey's end, and which may be reckoned among the mortal symptoms of their last disease; that is, to become more narrow-minded, miserable, and tenacious, unready to part with anything, when they are ready to part with all, and afraid to want when they have no time to spend; meanwhile physicians, who know that many are mad but in a single depraved imagination, and one prevalent decipiency; and that beside and out of such single deliriums a man may meet with sober actions and good sense in bedlam; cannot but smile to see the heirs and concerned relations gratulating themselves on the sober departure of their friends; and though they behold such mad covetous passages, content to think they die in good understanding, and in their sober senses.

Avarice, which is not only infidelity but idolatry, either from covetous progeny or questuary education, had no root in his breast, who made good works the expression of his faith, and was big with desires unto public and lasting charities; and surely where good wishes and charitable intentions exceed abilities, theorical beneficency may be more than a dream. They build not castles

in the air who would build churches on earth: and though they leave no such structures here, may lay good foundations in heaven. In brief, his life and death were such, that I could not blame them who wished the like, and almost to have been himself; almost, I say; for though we may wish the prosperous appurtenances of others, or to be another in his happy accidents, yet so intrinsical is every man unto himself, that some doubt may be made, whether any would exchange his being, or substantially become another man.

He had wisely seen the world at home and abroad, and thereby observed under what variety men are deluded in the pursuit of that which is not here to be found. And although he had no opinion of reputed felicities below, and apprehended men widely out in the estimate of such happiness; yet his sober contempt of the world wrought no Democritism or Cynicism, no laughing or snarling at it, as well understanding there are not felicities in this world to satisfy a serious mind; and therefore, to soften the stream of our lives, we are fain to take in the reputed contentions of this world, to unite with the crowd in their beatitudes, and to make ourselves happy by consortion, opinion, or co-existimation: for strictly to separate from received and customary felicities, and to confine unto the rigour of realities, were to contract the consolation of our beings unto too uncomfortable circumscriptions.

Not to fear death, nor desire it, was short of his resolution: to be dissolved, and be with Christ, was his dying ditty. He conceived his thread long, in no long course of years, and when he had scarce out-lived the second life of Lazarus; esteeming it enough to approach the years of his Saviour, who so ordered his own human state, as not to be old upon earth.

But to be content with death may be better than to desire it; a miserable life may make us wish for death, but a virtuous one to rest in it; which is the advantage of those resolved Christians, who looking on death not only as the sting, but the period and end of sin, the horizon and isthmus between this life and a better, and the death of this world but as a nativity of another, do contentedly submit unto the common necessity, and envy not Enoch or Elias.

Not to be content with life is the unsatisfactory state of those who destroy themselves; who being afraid to live, run blindly upon their own death, which no man fears by experience: and the Stoics had a notable doctrine to take away the fear thereof;

that is, in such extremities, to desire that which is not to be avoided, and wish what might be feared; and so made evils voluntary, and to suit with their own desires, which took off the terror of them.

But the ancient martyrs were not encouraged by such fallacies; who, though they feared not death, were afraid to be their own executioners; and therefore thought it more wisdom to crucify their lusts than their bodies, to circumcise than stab their hearts, and to mortify than kill themselves.

His willingness to leave this world about that age, when most men think they may best enjoy it, that paradoxical unto worldly ears, was not strange unto mine, who have so often observed, that many, though old, oft stick fast unto the world, and seem to be drawn like Cacus' oxen, backward, with great struggling and reluctancy unto the grave. The long habit of living makes mere men more hardly to part with life, and all to be nothing, but what is to come. To live at the rate of the old world, when some could scarce remember themselves young, may afford no better digested death than a more moderate period. Many would have thought it an happiness to have had their lot of life in some notable conjunctures of ages past; but the uncertainty of future times hath tempted few to make a part in ages to come. And surely, he that hath taken the true altitude of things, and rightly calculated the degenerate state of this age, is not like to envy those that shall live in the next, much less three or four hundred years hence, when no man can comfortably imagine what face this world will carry: and therefore since every age makes a step unto the end of all things, and the scripture affords so hard a character of the last times; quiet minds will be content with their generations, and rather bless ages past, than be ambitious of those to come.

Though age had set no seal upon his face, yet a dim eye might clearly discover fifty in his actions; and therefore, since wisdom is the grey hair, and an unspotted life old age; although his years came short, he might have been said to have held up with longer livers, and to have been Solomon's old man. And surely if we deduct all those days of our life which we might wish unlived, and which abate the comfort of those we now live; if we reckon up only those days which God hath accepted of our lives, a life of good years will hardly be a span long: the son in this sense may out-live the father, and none be climacterically old. He that early arriveth unto the parts and prudence of age, is happily old without the uncomfortable attendants of it; and 'tis superfluous

to live unto grey hairs, when in a precocious temper we anticipate the virtues of them. In brief, he cannot be accounted young who out-liveth the old man. He that hath early arrived unto the measure of a perfect stature in Christ, hath already fulfilled the prime and longest intention of his being: and one day lived after the perfect rule of piety, is to be preferred before sinning immortality.

Although he attained not unto the years of his predecessors, yet he wanted not those preserving virtues which confirm the thread of weaker constitutions. Cautelous chastity and crafty sobriety were far from him; those jewels were paragon, without flaw, hair, ice, or cloud in him: which affords me a hint to proceed in these good wishes, and few mementos unto you.*

* The Letter closes with certain precepts which Sir Thomas Browne afterwards used as a foundation for his Christian Morals.

CHRISTIAN MORALS. PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL AND CORRECT MANUSCRIPT OF THE AUTHOR, BY JOHN JEFFERY, D.D., ARCH-DEACON OF NORWICH.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DAVID, EARL OF BUCHAN, VISCOUNT AUCHTERHOUSE, LORD CARDROSS AND GLENDOVACHIE, ONE OF THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE, AND LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTIES OF STIRLING AND CLACKMANNAN, IN NORTH BRITAIN.

MY LORD,—The honour you have done our family obligeth us to make all just acknowledgments of it: and there is no form of acknowledgment in our power, more worthy of your lordship's acceptance, than this dedication of the last work of our honoured and learned father. Encouraged hereunto by the knowledge we have of your lordship's judicious relish of universal learning, and sublime virtue, we beg the favour of your acceptance of it, which will very much oblige our family in general, and her in particular, who is,

My Lord,

Your lordship's most humble Servant,

ELIZABETH LITTLETON.

THE PREFACE.

IF any one, after he has read Religio Medici, and the ensuing discourse, can make doubt whether the same person was the author of them both, he may be assured, by the testimony of Mrs. Littleton, Sir Thomas Browne's daughter, who lived with her father when it was composed by him; and who, at the time, read it written by his own hand; and also by the testimony of others (of whom I am one) who read the manuscript of the author, immediately after his death, and who have since read the same; from which it hath been faithfully and exactly transcribed for the press. The reason why it was not printed sooner is, because it was unhappily lost, by being mislaid among other manuscripts, for which search was lately made in the presence of the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, of which his Grace, by letter, informed Mrs. Littleton, when he sent the manuscript to her. There is nothing printed in the discourse, or in the short notes, but what is found in the original manuscript of the author, except only where an oversight had made the addition or transposition of some words necessary.

JOHN JEFFERY,
Archdeacon of Norwich.

CHRISTIAN MORALS.

PART THE FIRST.

TREAD softly and circumspectly in this funambulatory track and narrow path of goodness: pursue virtue virtuously:* leaven not good actions, nor render virtue disputable. Stain not fair acts with foul intentions; maim not uprightness by halting concomitances, nor circumstantially deprave substantial goodness.

Consider† whereabout thou art in Cebes's table, or that old philosophical pinax of the life of man: whether thou art yet in the road of uncertainties; whether thou hast yet entered the narrow gate, got up the hill and asperous way, which leadeth unto the house of sanity; or taken that purifying potion from the hand of sincere erudition, which may send thee clear and pure away unto a virtuous and happy life.

In this virtuous voyage of thy life hull not about like the ark, without the use of rudder, mast, or sail, and bound for no port. Let not disappointment cause despondency, nor difficulty despair. Think not that you are sailing from Lima to Manilla, when you may fasten up the rudder, and sleep before the wind; but expect rough seas, flaws, and contrary blasts: and 'tis well, if by many cross tacks and veerings, you arrive at the port; for we sleep in lions' skins in our progress unto virtue, and we slide not but climb unto it.

Sit not down in the popular forms and common level of virtues. Offer not only peace-offerings but holocausts unto God: where all is due make no reserve, and cut not a cummin-seed with the Almighty: to serve Him singly to serve ourselves, were too partial a piece of piety, not like to place us in the illustrious mansions of glory.

II‡

REST not in an ovation§ but a triumph over thy passions. Let

* This sentence begins the closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend, which were afterwards amplified into the Christian Morals.

† The remainder of this section comprises the second and third paragraphs of the closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

‡ Sect. II. The first and last two sentences compose par. 17th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend. The succeeding par. (18) is given here, having been omitted in the Christian Morals:—"Give no quarter unto those vices which are of thine

§ Ovation, a petty and minor kind of triumph.

anger walk hanging down the head; let malice go manacled, and envy fettered after thee. Behold within thee the long train of thy trophies, not without thee. Make the quarrelling Lapithytes sleep, and Centaurs within lie quiet. Chain up the unruly legion of thy breast. Lead thine own captivity captive, and be Cæsar within thyself.*

III[¶]

HE that is chaste and continent not to impair his strength, or honest for fear of contagion, will hardly be heroically virtuous. Adjourn not this virtue until that temper when Cato could lend out his wife, and impotent satyrs write satires upon lust; but be chaste in thy flaming days, when Alexander dared not trust his

inward family, and, having a root in thy temper, plead a right and property in thee. Examine well thy complexional inclinations. Raise early batteries against those strongholds built upon the rock of nature, and make this a great part of the militia of thy life. The politic nature of vice must be opposed by policy, and therefore wiser honesties project and plot against sin; wherein notwithstanding we are not to rest in generals, or the trite stratagems of art: that may succeed with one temper which may prove successless with another. There is no community or commonwealth of virtue; every man must study his own economy, and erect these rules unto the figure of himself."

* Cf. MS. Sloan. 1848:—"To restrain the rise of extravagances, and timely to ostracise the most overgrowing enormities makes a calm and quiet state in the dominion of ourselves, for vices have their ambitions, and will be above one another, but though many may possess us, yet is there commonly one that hath the dominion over us; one that lordeth over all, and the rest remain slaves unto the humour of it. Such towering vices are not to be temporally exostracised, but perpetually exiled, or rather to be served like the rank poppies in Tarquin's garden, and made shorter by the head; for the sharpest arrows are to be let fly against all such imperious vices, which, neither enduring priority or equality, Cæsarean or Pompeian primity, must be absolute over all; for these opprobriously denominate us here, and chiefly condemn us hereafter, and will stand in capital letters over our heads as the titles of our sufferings."

[¶] Sect. III. The 4th paragraph of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

eyes upon the fair sisters of Darius, and when so many think there is no other way but Origen's.*

IV❧

SHOW thy art in honesty, and lose not thy virtue by the bad managery of it. Be temperate and sober; not to preserve your body in an ability for wanton ends; not to avoid the infamy of common transgressors that way, and thereby to hope to expiate or palliate obscure and closer vices; not to spare your purse, nor simply to enjoy health; but, in one word, that thereby you may truly serve God, which every sickness will tell you you cannot well do without health. The sick man's sacrifice is but a lame oblation. Pious treasures, laid up in healthful days, plead for sick non-performances; without which we must needs look back with anxiety upon the lost opportunities of health; and may have cause rather to envy than pity the ends of penitent public sufferers, who go with healthful prayers unto the last scene of their lives, and in the integrity of their faculties return their spirit unto God that gave it.

V

BE charitable before wealth make thee covetous, and lose not the glory of the mite. If riches increase, let thy mind hold pace with them; and think it not enough to be liberal, but munificent. Though a cup of cold water from some hand may not be without its reward, yet stick not thou for wine and oil for the wounds of the distressed; and treat the poor, as our Saviour did the multitude, to the reliques of some baskets.❧ Diffuse thy beneficence early, and while thy treasures call thee master; there may be an Atropos of thy fortunes before that of thy life, and thy wealth cut off before that hour, when all men shall be poor; for the justice of death looks equally upon the dead, and Charon expects no more from Alexander than from Irus.

VI

GIVE not only unto seven, but also unto eight, that is, unto more than many.* Though to give unto every one that asketh may seem severe advice,** yet give thou also before asking; that is,

* Who is said to have castrated himself.

❧ Sect. IV. Except the first sentence, this section concludes the first paragraph of the concluding reflections of Letter to a Friend.

❧ The preceding part of this section constitutes the 5th paragraph of the closing reflections of Letter to a Friend.

* Ecclesiasticus.

** Luke.

where want is silently clamorous, and men's necessities not their tongues do loudly call for thy mercies. For though sometimes necessitousness be dumb, or misery speak not out, yet true charity is sagacious, and will find out hints for beneficence. Acquaint thyself with the physiognomy of want, and let the dead colours and first lines of necessity suffice to tell thee there is an object for thy bounty. Spare not where thou canst not easily be prodigal, and fear not to be undone by mercy; for since he who hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Almighty rewarder, who observes no Ides but every day for His payments, charity becomes pious usury, Christian liberality the most thriving industry; and what we adventure in a cockboat may return in a carrack unto us. He who thus casts his bread upon the water shall surely find it again; for though it falleth to the bottom, it sinks but like the axe of the prophet, to rise again unto him.

VII*

IF avarice be thy vice, yet make it not thy punishment. Miserable men commiserate not themselves, bowelless unto others, and merciless unto their own bowels. Let the fruition of things bless the possession of them, and think it more satisfaction to live richly than die rich. For since thy good works, not thy goods, will follow thee; since wealth is an appurtenance of life, and no dead man is rich; to famish in plenty, and live poorly to die rich, were a multiplying improvement in madness, and use upon use in folly.

VIII⁂

TRUST not to the omnipotency of gold, and say not unto it, thou art my confidence. Kiss not thy hand to that terrestrial sun, nor bow thy ear unto its servitude. A slave unto mammon makes no servant unto God. Covetousness cracks the sinews of faith; numbs the apprehension of anything above sense; and, only affected with the certainty of things present, makes a peradventure of things to come; lives but unto one world, nor hopes but fears another; makes their own death sweet unto others, bitter unto themselves; brings formal sadness, scenical mourning, and no wet eyes at the grave.

* Sect. VII. Paragraph 7th of closing reflections of Letter to a Friend.

⁂ Sect. VIII. Paragraph 6th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

IX*

PERSONS lightly dipt, not grained in generous honesty, are but pale in goodness, and faint hued in integrity. But be thou what thou virtuously art, and let not the ocean wash away thy tincture. Stand magnetically upon that axis, when prudent simplicity hath fixt there; and let no attraction invert the poles of thy honesty. That vice may be uneasy and even monstrous unto thee, let iterated good acts and long-confirmed habits make virtue almost natural, or a second nature in thee. Since virtuous superstructions have commonly generous foundations, dive into thy inclinations, and early discover what nature bids thee to be or tells thee thou mayest be. They who thus timely descend into themselves, and cultivate the good seeds which nature hath set in them, prove not shrubs but cedars in their generation. And to be in the form of the best of the bad[๑] or the worst of the good, will be no satisfaction unto them.

X[๑]

MAKE not the consequence of virtue the ends thereof. Be not beneficent for a name or cymbal of applause; nor exact and just in commerce for the advantages of trust and credit, which attend the reputation of true and punctual dealing: for these rewards, though unsought for, plain virtue will bring with her. To have other by-ends in good actions sours laudable performances, which must have deeper roots, motives, and instigations, to give them the stamp of virtues.[๑]

* Sect. IX. Paragraph 8th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

๑ Optimi malorum pessimi bonorum.

๑ Sect. X. Paragraph 10th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

๑ The following (11th par. of closing reflections to the Letter, &c.) seems to have been omitted in the Christian Morals:—"Though human infirmity may betray thy heedless days into the popular ways of extravagancy, yet let not thine own depravity, or the torrent of vicious times, carry thee into desperate enormities in opinions, manners, or actions: if thou hast dipped thy foot in the river, yet venture not over Rubicon; run not into extremities from whence there is no regression, nor be ever so closely shut up within the holds of vice and iniquity, as not to find some escape by a postern of recipiscency."

XI*

LET not the law of thy country be the non ultra of thy honesty; nor think that always good enough which the law will make good. Narrow not the law of charity, equity, mercy. Join gospel righteousness with legal right. Be not a mere Gamaliel in the faith, but let the sermon in the mount be thy targum unto the law of Sinai.[9]

XII

LIVE by old ethicks and the classical rules of honesty. Put no new names or notions upon authentic virtues and vices.[q] Think not that morality is ambulatory; that vices in one age are not vices in another; or that virtues, which are the everlasting seal of right reason, may be stamped by opinion. And therefore, though vicious times invert the opinions of things, and set up new ethicks against virtue, yet hold thou unto old morality; and rather than follow a multitude to do evil, stand like Pompey's pillar conspicuous by thyself, and single in integrity. And since the worst of times afford imitable examples of virtue; since no deluge of vice is like to be so general but more than eight will escape;[x] eye well those heroes who have held their heads above water, who have touched pitch and not been defiled, and in the common contagion have remained uncorrupted.

XIII**

LET age, not envy, draw wrinkles on thy cheeks; be content to be envied, but envy not. Emulation may be plausible and indignation allowable, but admit no treaty with that passion which no circumstance can make good. A displacency at the good of others because they enjoy it, though not unworthy of it, is an absurd depravity, sticking fast unto corrupted nature, and often too hard for humility and charity, the great suppressors of envy.

* Sect. XI. Paragraph 9th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

[9] Targum, &c. A paraphrase or amplification.

[q] MS. Sloan. 1847, adds:—"Think not modesty will never gild its like; fortitude will not be degraded into audacity and foolhardiness; liberality will not be put off with the name of prodigality, nor frugality exchange its name with avarice and solid parsimony, and so our vices be exalted into virtues."

[x] Eight will escape. Alluding to the flood of Noah.

** Sect. XIII. Paragraph 13th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

This surely is a lion not to be strangled but by Hercules himself, or the highest stress of our minds, and an atom of that power which subdueth all things unto itself.

XIV*

OWE not thy humility unto humiliation from adversity, but look humbly down in that state when others look upwards upon thee. Think not thy own shadow longer than that of others, nor delight to take the altitude of thyself. Be patient in the age of pride, when men live by short intervals of reason under the dominion of humour and passion, when it is in the power of every one to transform thee out of thyself, and run thee into the short madness. If you cannot imitate Job, yet come not short of Socrates, and those patient pagans who tired the tongues of their enemies, while they perceived they spit their malice at brazen walls and statues.

XV♑

LET not the sun in Capricorn♑ go down upon thy wrath, but write thy wrongs in ashes. Draw the curtain of night upon injuries, shut them up in the tower of oblivion,♑ and let them be as though they had not been. To forgive our enemies, yet hope that God will punish them, is not to forgive enough. To forgive them ourselves, and not to pray God to forgive them, is a partial piece of charity. Forgive thine enemies totally, and without any reserve that however God will revenge thee.

XVI**

WHILE thou so hotly disclaimest the devil, be not guilty of diabolism. Fall not into one name with that unclean spirit, nor act his nature whom thou so much abhorrest: that is, to accuse, calumniate, backbite, whisper, detract, or sinistrously interpret others. Degenerous depravities, and narrow-minded vices! not

* Sect. XIV. Paragraph 12th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

♑ Sect. XV. Paragraph 15th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

♑ Even when the days are shortest.

♑ Alluding unto the tower of oblivion mentioned by Procopios, which was the name of a tower of imprisonment among the Persians: whoever was put therein was as it were buried alive, and it was death for any but to name him.

** Sect. XVI. Paragraph 14th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

only below St. Paul's noble Christian but Aristotle's true gentleman.* Trust not with some that the epistle of St. James is apocryphal, and so read with less fear that stabbing truth, that in company with this vice "thy religion is in vain." Moses broke the tables without breaking of the law; but where charity is broke, the law itself is shattered, which cannot be whole without love, which is "the fulfilling of it." Look humbly upon thy virtues; and though thou art rich in some, yet think thyself poor and naked without that crowning grace, which "thinketh no evil, which envieth not, which beareth, hopeth, believeth, endureth all things." With these sure graces, while busy tongues are crying out for a drop of cold water, mutes may be in happiness, and sing the trisagion in heaven.

XVII

HOWEVER thy understanding may waver in the theories of true and false, yet fasten the rudder of thy will, steer straight unto good and fall not foul on evil. Imagination is apt to rove, and conjecture to keep no bounds. Some have run out so far, as to fancy the stars might be but the light of the crystalline heaven shot through perforations on the bodies of the orbs. Others more ingeniously doubt whether there hath not been a vast tract of land in the Atlantic ocean, which earthquakes and violent causes have long ago devoured.[a] Speculative misapprehensions may be innocuous, but immorality pernicious; theoretical mistakes and physical deviations may condemn our judgments, not lead us into judgment. But perversity of will, immoral and sinful enormities walk with Adraste and Nemesis at their backs, pursue us unto judgment, and leave us viciously miserable.

XVIII

BID early defiance unto those vices which are of thine inward family, and having a root in thy temper plead a right and propriety in thee. Raise timely batteries against those strongholds built upon the rock of nature, and make this a great part of the militia of thy life. Delude not thyself into iniquities from participation or community, which abate the sense but not the obliquity of them. To conceive sins less or less of sins, because

* See Aristotle's Ethics, chapter of Magnanimity.

[a] MS. CIX. Rawl. adds:—"Whether there hath not been a passage from the Mediterranean into the Red Sea, and whether the ocean at first had a passage into the Mediterranean by the straits of Hercules."

others also transgress, were morally to commit that natural fallacy of man, to take comfort from society, and think adversities less because others also suffer them. The politic nature of vice must be opposed by policy; and, therefore, wiser honesties project and plot against it: wherein, notwithstanding, we are not to rest in generals, or the trite stratagems of art. That may succeed with one, which may prove successless with another: there is no community or commonweal of virtue: every man must study his own economy, and adapt such rules unto the figure of himself.

XIX*

BE substantially great in thyself, and more than thou appearest unto others; and let the world be deceived in thee, as they are in the lights of heaven. Hang early plummets upon the heels of pride, and let ambition have but an epicycle and narrow circuit in thee. Measure not thyself by thy morning shadow, but by the extent of thy grave: and reckon thyself above the earth, by the line thou must be contented with under it. Spread not into boundless expansions either of designs or desires. Think not that mankind liveth but for a few; and that the rest are born but to serve those ambitions, which make but flies of men and wildernesses of whole nations. Swell not into vehement actions which imbroil and confound the earth; but be one of those violent ones which force the kingdom of heaven.[a] If thou must needs rule, be Zeno's king, and enjoy that empire which every man gives himself. He who is thus his own monarch contentedly sways the sceptre of himself, not envying the glory of crowned heads and elohims of the earth. Could the world unite in the practice of that despised train of virtues, which the divine ethics of our Saviour hath so inculcated upon us, the furious face of things must disappear; Eden would be yet to be found, and the angels might look down, not with pity, but joy upon us.

XX

THOUGH the quickness of thine ear were able to reach the noise of the moon, which some think it maketh in its rapid revolution; though the number of thy ears should equal Argus his eyes; yet stop them all with the wise man's wax, and be deaf unto the suggestions of tale-bearers, calumniators, pickthank or malevolent delators, who, while quiet men sleep, sowing the

* Sect. XIX. Paragraph 16th of closing reflections to the Letter to a Friend.

[a] Matthew xi.

tares of discord and division, distract the tranquillity of charity and all friendly society. These are the tongues that set the world on fire, cankers of reputation, and like that of Jonas his gourd, wither a good name in a night. Evil spirits may sit still, while these spirits walk about and perform the business of hell. To speak more strictly, our corrupted hearts are the factories of the devil, which may be at work without his presence: for when that circumventing spirit hath drawn malice, envy, and all unrighteousness unto well-rooted habits in his disciples, iniquity then goes on upon its own legs; and if the gate of hell were shut up for a time, vice would still be fertile and produce the fruits of hell. Thus when God forsakes us, Satan also leaves us: for such offenders he looks upon as sure and sealed up, and his temptations then needless unto them.

XXI

ANNIHILATE not the mercies of God by the oblivion of ingratitude; for oblivion is a kind of annihilation; and for things to be as though they had not been, is like unto never being. Make not thy head a grave, but a repository of God's mercies. Though thou hadst the memory of Seneca or Simonides, and conscience the punctual memorist within us, yet trust not to thy remembrance in things which need phylacteries. Register not only strange, but merciful occurrences. Let Ephemerides not Olympiads give thee account of his mercies: let thy diaries stand thick with dutiful mementos and asterisks of acknowledgment. And to be complete and forget nothing, date not His mercy from thy nativity; look beyond the world, and before the era of Adam.

XXII

PAINT not the sepulchre of thyself, and strive not to beautify thy corruption. Be not an advocate for thy vices, nor call for many hour-glasses to justify thy imperfections. Think not that always good which thou thinkest thou canst always make good, nor that concealed which the sun doth not behold: that which the sun doth not now see, will be visible when the sun is out, and the stars are fallen from heaven. Meanwhile there is no darkness unto conscience; which can see without light, and in the deepest obscurity give a clear draught of things, which the cloud of dissimulation hath concealed from all eyes. There is a natural standing court within us, examining, acquitting, and condemning at the tribunal of ourselves; wherein iniquities have their natural thetas and no nocent is absolved by the verdict of himself. And

therefore, although our transgressions shall be tried at the last bar, the process need not be long: for the judge of all knoweth all, and every man will nakedly know himself; and when so few are like to plead not guilty, the assize must soon have an end.

XXIII

COMPLY with some humours, bear with others, but serve none. Civil complacency consists with decent honesty; flattery is a juggler, and no kin unto sincerity. But while thou maintainest the plain path, and scornest to flatter others, fall not into self-adulation, and become not thine own parasite. Be deaf unto thyself, and be not betrayed at home. Self-credulity, pride, and levity lead unto self-idolatry. There is no Damocles like unto self-opinion, nor any Syren to our own fawning conceptions. To magnify our minor things, or hug ourselves in our apparitions; to afford a credulous ear unto the clawing suggestions of fancy; to pass our days in painted mistakes of ourselves; and though we behold our own blood, to think ourselves the sons of Jupiter;* are blandishments of self-love, worse than outward delusion. By this imposture, wise men sometimes are mistaken in their elevation, and look above themselves. And fools, which are antipodes unto the wise, conceive themselves to be but their periœci, and in the same parallel with them.

XXIV

BE not a Hercules furens abroad, and a poltroon within thyself. To chase our enemies out of the field, and be led captive by our vices; to beat down our foes, and fall down to our concupiscences; are solecisms in moral schools, and no laurel attends them. To well manage our affections, and wild horses of Plato, are the highest circenses: and the noblest digladiation is in the theatre of ourselves; for therein our inward antagonists, not only like common gladiators, with ordinary weapons and downright blows made at us, but also, like retiary and laqueary combatants, with nets, frauds, and entanglements fall upon us. Weapons for such combats, are not to be forged at Lipara: Vulcan's art doth nothing in this internal militia; wherein not the armour of Achilles, but the armature of St. Paul, gives the glorious day, and triumphs not leading up into capitols, but up into the highest heavens. And, therefore, while so many think it the only valour to command and master others, study thou the dominion of thyself, and quiet thine own commotions. Let right reason be thy Lycurgus,

* As Alexander the Great did.

and lift up thy hand unto the law of it: move by the intelligences of the superior faculties, not by the rapt of passion, nor merely by that of temper and constitution. They who are merely carried on by the wheel of such inclinations, without the hand and guidance of sovereign reason, are but the automatous part of mankind, rather lived than living, or at least underliving themselves.

XXV

LET not fortune, which hath no name in scripture, have any in thy divinity. Let providence, not chance, have the honour of thy acknowledgments, and be thy Œdipus in contingencies. Mark well the paths and winding ways thereof; but be not too wise in the construction, or sudden in the application. The hand of providence writes often by abbreviatures, hieroglyphics or short characters, which, like the laconism on the wall, are not to be made out but by a hint or key from that spirit which indited them. Leave future occurrences to their uncertainties, think that which is present thy own; and, since 'tis easier to foretell an eclipse than a foul day at some distance, look for little regular below. Attend with patience the uncertainty of things, and what lieth yet unexerted in the chaos of futurity. The uncertainty and ignorance of things to come, makes the world new unto us by unexpected emergencies; whereby we pass not our days in the trite road of affairs affording no novity; for the novelizing spirit of man lives of variety, and the new faces of things.

XXVI

THOUGH a contented mind enlargeth the dimension of little things; and unto some it is wealth enough not to be poor; and others are well content, if they be but rich enough to be honest, and to give every man his due: yet fall not into that obsolete affectation of bravery, to throw away thy money, and to reject all honours or honourable stations in this courtly and splendid world. Old generosity is superannuated, and such contempt of the world out of date. No man is now like to refuse the favour of great ones, or be content to say unto princes, "Stand out of my sun." And if any there be of such antiquated resolutions, they are not like to be tempted out of them by great ones; and 'tis fair if they escape the name of hypochondriacks from the genius of latter times, unto whom contempt of the world is the most contemptible opinion; and to be able, like Bias, to carry all they have about them were to be the eighth wise man. However, the old tetrick philosophers looked always with indignation upon such a face of things; and observing the unnatural current of riches,

power, and honour in the world, and withal the imperfection and demerit of persons often advanced unto them, were tempted unto angry opinions, that affairs were ordered more by stars than reason, and that things went on rather by lottery than election.

XXVII

IF thy vessel be but small in the ocean of this world, if meanness of possessions be thy allotment upon earth, forget not those virtues which the great disposer of all bids thee to entertain from thy quality and condition; that is, submission, humility, content of mind, and industry. Content may dwell in all stations. To be low, but above contempt, may be high enough to be happy. But many of low degree may be higher than computed, and some cubits above the common commensuration; for in all states virtue gives qualifications and allowances, which make out defects. Rough diamonds are sometimes mistaken for pebbles; and meanness may be rich in accomplishments, which riches in vain desire. If our merits be above our stations, if our intrinsical value be greater than what we go for, or our value than our valuation, and if we stand higher in God's, than in the censor's book; it may make some equitable balance in the inequalities of this world, and there may be no such vast chasm or gulf between disparities as common measures determine. The divine eye looks upon high and low differently from that of man. They who seem to stand upon Olympus, and high mounted unto our eyes, may be but in the valleys, and low ground unto his; for he looks upon those as highest who nearest approach his divinity, and upon those as lowest who are farthest from it.

XXVIII

WHEN thou lookest upon the imperfections of others, allow one eye for what is laudable in them, and the balance they have from some excellency, which may render them considerable. While we look with fear or hatred upon the teeth of the viper, we may behold his eye with love. In venomous natures something may be amiable: poisons afford antipoisons: nothing is totally, or altogether uselessly bad. Notable virtues are sometimes dashed with notorious vices, and in some vicious tempers have been found illustrious acts of virtue; which makes such observable worth in some actions of king Demetrius, Antonius, and Ahab, as are not to be found in the same kind in Aristides, Numa, or David. Constancy, generosity, clemency, and liberality have been highly conspicuous in some persons not marked out in other concerns for example or imitation. But since good-

ness is exemplary in all, if others have not our virtues, let us not be wanting in theirs; nor scorning them for their vices whereof we are free, be condemned by their virtues wherein we are deficient. There is dross, alloy, and embasement in all human tempers; and he flieth without wings, who thinks to find Ophir or pure metal in any. For perfection is not, like light, centred in any one body; but, like the dispersed seminalities of vegetables at the creation, scattered through the whole mass of the earth, no place producing all, and almost all some. So that 'tis well, if a perfect man can be made out of many men, and, to the perfect eye of God, even out of mankind. Time, which perfects some things, imperfects also others. Could we intimately apprehend the ideated man, and as he stood in the intellect of God upon the first exertion by creation, we might more narrowly comprehend our present degeneration, and how widely we are fallen from the pure exemplar and idea of our nature: for after this corruptive elongation from a primitive and pure creation, we are almost lost in degeneration; and Adam hath not only fallen from his Creator, but we ourselves from Adam, our tycho and primary generator.*

XXIX

QUARREL not rashly with adversities not yet understood; and overlook not the mercies often bound up in them: for we consider not sufficiently the good of evils, nor fairly compute the mercies of providence in things afflictive at first hand. The

* MS. Sloan. 1885, adds:—"But at this distance and elongation we dearly know that depravity hath overspread us, corruption entered like oil into our bones. Imperfections upbraid us on all hands, and ignorance stands pointing at us in every corner in nature. We are unknowing in things which fall under cognition, yet drive at that which is above our comprehension. We have a slender knowledge of ourselves, and much less of God, wherein we are like to rest until the advantage of another being; and therefore in vain we seek to satisfy our souls in close apprehensions and piercing theories of the divinity even from the divine word. Meanwhile we have a happy sufficiency in our own natures, to apprehend His good will and pleasure; it being not of our concern or capacity from thence to apprehend or reach His nature, the divine revelation in such points being not framed unto intellectuals of earth. Even the angels and spirits have enough to admire in their sublimer created natures; admiration being the act of the creature and not of God, who doth not admire Himself."

famous Andreas Doria being invited to a feast by Aloysio Fieschi, with design to kill him, just the night before fell mercifully into a fit of the gout, and so escaped that mischief. When Cato intended to kill himself, from a blow which he gave his servant, who would not reach his sword unto him, his hand so swelled that he had much ado to effect his design. Hereby any one but a resolved Stoic might have taken a fair hint of consideration, and that some merciful genius would have contrived his preservation. To be sagacious in such intercurrences is not superstition, but wary and pious discretion; and to contemn such hints were to be deaf unto the speaking hand of God, wherein Socrates and Cardan would hardly have been mistaken.

XXX

BREAK not open the gate of destruction, and make no haste or bustle unto ruin. Post not heedlessly on unto the non ultra of folly, or precipice of perdition. Let vicious ways have their tropics and deflections, and swim in the waters of sin but as in the Asphaltick lake, though smeared and defiled, not to sink to the bottom. If thou hast dipped thy foot in the brink, yet venture not over Rubicon. Run not into extremities from whence there is no regression. In the vicious ways of the world it mercifully falleth out that we become not extempore wicked, but it taketh some time and pains to undo ourselves. We fall not from virtue, like Vulcan from heaven, in a day. Bad dispositions require some time to grow into bad habits; bad habits must undermine good, and often-repeated acts make us habitually evil: so that by gradual depravations, and while we are but staggeringly evil, we are not left without parenthesis of considerations, thoughtful rebukes, and merciful interventions, to recall us unto ourselves. For the wisdom of God hath methodized the course of things unto the best advantage of goodness, and thinking considerators overlook not the tract thereof.

XXXI

SINCE men and women have their proper virtues and vices; and even twins of different sexes have not only distinct coverings in the womb, but differing qualities and virtuous habits after; transplace not their proprieties, and confound not their distinctions. Let masculine and feminine accomplishments shine in their proper orbs, and adorn their respective subjects. However, unite not the vices of both sexes in one; be not monstrous in iniquity, nor hermaphroditically vicious.

XXXII

IF generous honesty, valour, and plain dealing be the cognisance of thy family, or characteristic of thy country, hold fast such inclinations sucked in with thy first breath, and which lay in the cradle with thee. Fall not into transforming degenerations, which under the old name create a new nation. Be not an alien in thine own nation; bring not Orontes into Tiber: learn the virtues not the vices of thy foreign neighbours, and make thy imitation by discretion not contagion. Feel something of thyself in the noble acts of thy ancestors, and find in thine own genius that of thy predecessors. Rest not under the expired merits of others, shine by those of thy own. Flame not like the central fire which enlighteneth no eyes, which no man seeth, and most men think there's no such thing to be seen. Add one ray unto the common lustre; add not only to the number but the note of thy generation; and prove not a cloud but an asterisk in thy region.

XXXIII

SINCE thou hast an alarum in thy breast, which tells thee thou hast a living spirit in thee above two thousand times in an hour; dull not away thy days in slothful supinity and the tediousness of doing nothing. To strenuous minds there is an inquietude in over quietness, and no laboriousness in labour; and to tread a mile after the slow pace of a snail, or the heavy measures of the lazy of Brazilia, were a most tiring penance, and worse than a race of some furlongs at the Olympics. The rapid courses of the heavenly bodies are rather imitable by our thoughts, than our corporeal motions; yet the solemn motions of our lives amount unto a greater measure than is commonly apprehended. Some few men have surrounded the globe of the earth; yet many in the set locomotions and movements of their days have measured the circuit of it, and twenty thousand miles have been exceeded by them. Move circumspectly not meticulously, and rather carefully solicitous than anxiously solicitudinous. Think not there is a lion in the way, nor walk with leaden sandals in the paths of goodness; but in all virtuous motions let prudence determine thy measures. Strive not to run, like Hercules, a furlong in a breath: festination may prove precipitation; deliberating delay may be wise cunctation, and slowness no slothfulness.

XXXIV

SINCE virtuous actions have their own trumpets, and, without any noise from thyself, will have their resound abroad; busy not thy best member in the encomium of thyself. Praise is a debt we

owe unto the virtues of others, and due unto our own from all, whom malice hath not made mutes, or envy struck dumb. Fall not, however, into the common prevaricating way of self-commendation and boasting, by denoting the imperfections of others. He who discommendeth others obliquely, commendeth himself. He who whispers their infirmities, proclaims his own exemptions from them; and, consequently, says, I am not as this publican, or hic niger,* whom I talk of. Open ostentation and loud vain-glory is more tolerable than this obliquity, as but containing some froth, no ink; as but consisting of a personal piece of folly, nor complicated with uncharitableness.[o] Superfluously we seek a precarious applause abroad; every good man hath his plaudit within himself; and though his tongue be silent, is not without loud cymbals in his breast. Conscience will become his panegyrist, and never forget to crown and extol him unto himself.

XXXV

BLESS not thyself only that thou wert born in Athens;[q] but, among thy multiplied acknowledgments, lift up one hand unto heaven, that thou wert born of honest parents; that modesty, humility, patience, and veracity, lay in the same egg, and came into

* Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.—Hor.

[o] MS. Sloan. 1847, adds:—"They who thus closely and whisperingly calumniate the absent living, will be apt to strain their voice and be apt to be loud enough in infamy of the dead; wherein there should be a civil amnesty and an oblivion concerning those who are in a state where all things are forgotten; but Solon will make us ashamed to speak evil of the dead, a crime not actionable in Christian governments, yet hath been prohibited by Pagan laws and the old sanctions of Athens. Many persons are like many rivers, whose mouths are at a vast distance from their heads, for their words are as far from their thoughts as Canopus from the head of Nilus. These are of the former of those men, whose punishment in Dante's hell is to look everlastingly backward: if you have a mind to laugh at a man, or disparage the judgment of any one, set him a talking of things to come or events of hereafter contingency: which elude the cognition of such an arrogate, the knowledge of them whereto the ignorant pretend not, and the learned imprudently fail; wherein men seem to talk but as babes would do in the womb of their mother, of the things of the world which they are entering into."

[q] As Socrates did. Athens a place of learning and civility.

the world with thee. From such foundations thou mayst be happy in a virtuous precocity, and make an early and long walk in goodness; so mayst thou more naturally feel the contrariety of vice unto nature, and resist some by the antidote of thy temper. As charity covers, so modesty preventeth a multitude of sins; withholding from noon-day vices and brazen-browed iniquities, from sinning on the house-top, and painting our follies with the rays of the sun. Where this virtue reigneth, though vice may show its head, it cannot be in its glory. Where shame of sin sets, look not for virtue to arise; for when modesty taketh wing, Astrea* goes soon after.

XXXVI

THE heroical vein of mankind runs much in the soldiery, and courageous part of the world; and in that form we oftenest find men above men. History is full of the gallantry of that tribe; and when we read their notable acts, we easily find what a difference there is between a life in Plutarch and in Laertius. Where true fortitude dwells, loyalty, bounty, friendship, and fidelity may be found. A man may confide in persons constituted for noble ends, who dare do and suffer, and who have a hand to burn for their country and their friend. Small and creeping things are the product of petty souls. He is like to be mistaken, who makes choice of a covetous man for a friend, or relieth upon the reed of narrow and poltroon friendship. Pitiful things are only to be found in the cottages of such breasts; but bright thoughts, clear deeds, constancy, fidelity, bounty, and generous honesty are the gems of noble minds; wherein, to derogate from none, the true heroic English gentleman hath no peer.

PART THE SECOND

I

PUNISH not thyself with pleasure; glut not thy sense with palative delights; nor revenge the contempt of temperance by the penalty of satiety. Were there an age of delight or any pleasure durable, who would not honour Volupia? but the race of delight is short, and pleasures have mutable faces. The pleasures of one age are not pleasures in another, and their lives fall short of our own. Even in our sensual days, the strength of delight is in its seldomness or rarity, and sting in its satiety: mediocrity is its life, and immoderacy its confusion. The luxurious emperors

* Astrea, goddess of justice and consequently of all virtue.

of old inconsiderately satiated themselves with the dainties of sea and land, till wearied through all varieties, their refections became a study unto them, and they were fain to feed by invention: novices in true epicurism! which, by mediocrity, paucity, quick and healthful appetite, makes delights smartly acceptable; whereby Epicurus himself found Jupiter's brain in a piece of Cytheridian cheese,* and the tongues of nightingales in a dish of onions. Hereby healthful and temperate poverty hath the start of nauseating luxury; unto whose clear and naked appetite every meal is a feast, and in one single dish the first course of Metellus;[9] who are cheaply hungry, and never lose their hunger, or advantage of a craving appetite, because obvious food contents it; while Nero,[9] half famished, could not feed upon a piece of bread, and, lingering after his snowed water, hardly got down an ordinary cup of Calda.[¥] By such circumscriptions of pleasure the contemned philosophers reserved unto themselves the secret of delight, which the Helluos of those days lost in their exorbitances. In vain we study delight; it is at the command of every sober mind, and in every sense born with us: but nature, who teacheth us the rule of pleasure, instructeth also in the bounds thereof, and where its line expireth. And, therefore, temperate minds, not pressing their pleasures until the sting appeareth, enjoy their contentations contentedly, and without regret, and so escape the folly of excess, to be pleased unto displacency.

II

BRING candid eyes unto the perusal of men's works, and let not Zoilism or detraction blast well-intended labours. He that endureth no faults in men's writings must only read his own, wherein, for the most part, all appeareth white. Quotation mistakes, inadvertency, expedition, and human lapses, may make not only moles but warts in learned authors; who, notwithstanding, being judged by the capital matter, admit not of disparagement. I should unwillingly affirm that Cicero was but slightly versed in Homer, because in his work, De Gloria, he ascribed those verses unto Ajax, which were delivered by Hector. What if Plautus, in the account of Hercules, mistaketh nativity for conception? Who

* Cerebrum Jovis, for a delicious bit.

[9] His riotous pontifical supper, the great variety whereat is to be seen in Macrobius.

[9] Nero, in his flight.

[¥] Caldæ gelidæque minister.

would have mean thoughts of Apollinaris Sidonius, who seems to mistake the river Tigris for Euphrates; and, though a good historian and learned bishop of Avergne had the misfortune to be out in the story of David, making mention of him when the ark was sent back by the Philistines upon a cart; which was before his time. Though I have no great opinion of Machiavel's learning, yet I shall not presently say that he was but a novice in Roman history, because he was mistaken in placing Commodus after the Emperor Severus. Capital truths are to be narrowly eyed; collateral lapses and circumstantial deliveries not to be too strictly sifted. And if the substantial subject be well forged out, we need not examine the sparks which irregularly fly from it.

III

LET well-weighed considerations, not stiff and peremptory assumptions, guide thy discourses, pen, and actions. To begin or continue our works like Trismegistus of old, "verum certe verum atque verissimum est,"* would sound arrogantly unto present ears in this strict enquiring age; wherein, for the most part, 'probably' and 'perhaps' will hardly serve to mollify the spirit of captious contradictors. If Cardan saith that a parrot is a beautiful bird, Scaliger will set his wits to work to prove it a deformed animal. The compage of all physical truths is not so closely jointed, but opposition may find intrusion; nor always so closely maintained, as not to suffer attrition. Many positions seem quodlibetically constituted, and, like a Delphian blade, will cut on both sides. Some truths seem almost falsehoods, and some falsehoods almost truths; wherein falsehood and truth seem almost æquilibriously stated, and but a few grains of distinction to bear down the balance. Some have digged deep, yet glanced by the royal vein; and a man may come unto the pericardium, but not the heart of truth. Besides, many things are known, as some are seen, that is by parallaxis, or at some distance from their true and proper beings, the superficial regard of things having a different aspect from their true and central natures. And this moves sober pens unto suspensory and timorous assertions, nor presently to obtrude them as Sybil's leaves, which after considerations may find to be but folious appearances, and not the central and vital interiors of truth.

IV

VALUE the judicious, and let not mere acquests in minor parts of learning gain thy pre-existimation. 'Tis an unjust way of com-

* In Tabula Smaragdina.

pute, to magnify a weak head for some Latin abilities; and to undervalue a solid judgment, because he knows not the genealogy of Hector. When that notable king of France* would have his son to know but one sentence in Latin; had it been a good one, perhaps it had been enough. Natural parts and good judgments rule the world. States are not governed by ergotisms. Many have ruled well, who could not, perhaps, define a commonwealth; and they who understand not the globe of the earth, command a great part of it. Where natural logic prevails not, artificial too often faileth. Where nature fills the sails, the vessel goes smoothly on; and when judgment is the pilot, the insurance need not be high. When industry builds upon nature, we may expect pyramids: where that foundation is wanting, the structure must be low. They do most by books, who could do much without them; and he that chiefly owes himself unto himself, is the substantial man.

V

LET thy studies be free as thy thoughts and contemplations: but fly not only upon the wings of imagination; join sense unto reason, and experiment unto speculation, and so give life unto embryon truths, and verities yet in their chaos. There is nothing more acceptable unto the ingenious world, than this noble eluctation of truth; wherein, against the tenacity of prejudice and prescription, this century now prevaileth. What libraries of new volumes after times will behold, and in what a new world of knowledge the eyes of our posterity may be happy, a few ages may joyfully declare; and is but a cold thought unto those who cannot hope to behold this exantlation of truth, or that obscured virgin half out of the pit: which might make some content with a commutation of the time of their lives, and to commend the fancy of the Pythagorean metempsychosis; whereby they might hope to enjoy this happiness in their third or fourth selves, and behold that in Pythagoras, which they now but foresee in Euphorbus.[9] The world, which took but six days to make, is like to take six thousand to make out: meanwhile, old truths voted down begin to resume their places, and new ones arise upon us; wherein there is no comfort in the happiness of Tully's Elysium,[a] or any satisfaction

* Louis the Eleventh. Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.

[9] Ipse ego, nam memini, Trojani tempore belli,
Panthoides Euphorbus eram.—Ovid.

[a] Who comforted himself that he should there converse with the old philosophers.

from the ghosts of the ancients, who knew so little of what is now well known. Men disparage not antiquity, who prudently exalt new enquiries; and make not them the judges of truth, who were but fellow enquirers of it. Who can but magnify the endeavours of Aristotle, and the noble start which learning had under him; or less than pity the slender progression made upon such advantages? while many centuries were lost in repetitions and transcriptions, sealing up the book of knowledge. And, therefore, rather than to swell the leaves of learning by fruitless repetitions, to sing the same song in all ages, nor adventure at essays beyond the attempt of others, many would be content that some would write like Helmont or Paracelsus; and be willing to endure the monstrosity of some opinions, for divers singular notions requiting such aberrations.

VI

DESPISE not the obliquities of younger ways, nor despair of better things whereof there is yet no prospect. Who would imagine that Diogenes, who in his younger days was a falsifier of money, should in the after-course of his life be so great a contemner of metal? Some negroes who believe the resurrection, think that they shall rise white.* Even in this life, regeneration may imitate resurrection; our black and vicious tinctures may wear off, and goodness clothe us with candour. Good admonitions knock not always in vain. There will be signal examples of God's mercy, and the angels must not want their charitable rejoices for the conversion of lost sinners. Figures of most angles do nearest approach unto circles which have no angles at all. Some may be near unto goodness, who are conceived far from it; and many things happen, not likely to ensue from any promises of antecedences. Culpable beginnings have found commendable conclusions, and infamous courses pious retractations. Detestable sinners have proved exemplary converts on earth, and may be glorious in the apartment of Mary Magdalen in heaven. Men are not the same through all divisions of their ages: time, experience, self-reflections, and God's mercies, make in some well-tempered minds a kind of translation before death, and men to differ from themselves as well as from other persons. Hereof the old world afforded many examples, to the infamy of latter ages, wherein men too often live by the rule of their inclinations; so that, with-

* Mandelslo's travels.

out any astral prediction, the first day gives the last:* men are commonly as they were: or rather, as bad dispositions run into worser habits, the evening doth not crown, but sourly conclude the day.

VII

IF the Almighty will not spare us according to his merciful capitulation at Sodom; if his goodness please not to pass over a great deal of bad for a small pittance of good, or to look upon us in a lump; there is slender hope for mercy, or sound presumption of fulfilling half his will, either in persons or nations: they who excel in some virtues being so often defective in others; few men driving at the extent and amplitude of goodness, but computing themselves by their best parts, and others by their worst, are content to rest in those virtues which others commonly want. Which makes this speckled face of honesty in the world; and which was the imperfection[a] of the old philosophers and great pretenders unto virtue, who well declining the gaping vices of intemperance, incontinency, violence, and oppression, were yet blindly peccant in iniquities of closer faces, were envious, malicious, contemners, scoffers, censurers, and stuffed with vizard vices, no less depraving the ethereal particle and diviner portion of man. For envy, malice, hatred, are the qualities of Satan, close and dark like himself; and where such brands smoke, the soul cannot be white. Vice may be had at all prices; expensive and costly iniquities, which make the noise, cannot be every man's sins: but the soul may be foully inquinated at a very low rate; and a man may be cheaply vicious, to the perdition of himself.

* Primusque dies dedit extremum.

[a] MS. Sloan. 1874 substitutes here:—"Persons, sects, and nations, mainly settling upon some Christian particulars, which they conceive most acceptable unto God, and promoting the interest of their inclinations, parties, and divisions; every one reckoning and preferring himself by the particulars wherein he excelleth, and decrying all others, though highly eminent in other Christian virtues. Which makes this speckled face of honesty in the world; whereas, if men would not seek themselves abroad; if every one would judge and reckon himself by his worst, and others by their best parts, this deception must needs vanish; humility would gain ground; charity would overspread the face of the church, and the fruits of the spirit not be so thinly found among us.

"This was the imperfection," &c.

VIII

OPINION rides upon the neck of reason; and men are happy, wise, or learned, according as that empress shall set them down in the register of reputation. However, weigh not thyself in the scales of thy own opinion, but let the judgment of the judicious be the standard of thy merit. Self-estimation is a flatterer too readily entitling us unto knowledge and abilities, which others solicitously labour after, and doubtfully think they attain. Surely such confident tempers do pass their days in best tranquillity, who resting in the opinion of their own abilities, are happily gulled by such contentation; wherein pride, self-conceit, confidence, and opiniatrity, will hardly suffer any to complain of imperfection. To think themselves in the right, or all that right, or only that, which they do or think, is a fallacy of high content; though others laugh in their sleeves, and look upon them as in a deluded state of judgment: wherein, notwithstanding, 'twere but a civil piece of complacency to suffer them to sleep who would not wake, to let them rest in their securities, nor by dissent or opposition to stagger their contentments.

IX

SINCE the brow speaks often truth, since eyes and noses have tongues, and the countenance proclaims the heart and inclinations; let observation so far instruct thee in physiognomical lines, as to be some rule for thy distinction, and guide for thy affection unto such as look most like men. Mankind, methinks, is comprehended in a few faces, if we exclude all visages which in any way participate of symmetries and schemes of look common unto other animals. For as though man were the extract of the world, in whom all were "in coagulato," which in their forms were "in soluto" and at extension; we often observe that men do most act those creatures, whose constitution, parts, and complexion, do most predominate in their mixtures. This is a corner stone in physiognomy, and holds some truth not only in particular persons but also in whole nations. There are, therefore, provincial faces, national lips and noses, which testify not only the natures of those countries, but of those which have them elsewhere. Thus we may make England the whole earth, dividing it not only into Europe, Asia, Africa, but the particular regions thereof; and may in some latitude affirm, that there are Egyptians, Scythians, Indians among us, who, though born in England, yet carry the faces and air of those countries, and are also agreeable and correspondent unto their natures. Faces look uniformly unto our eyes: how

they appear unto some animals of a more piercing or differing sight, who are able to discover the inequalities, rubs, and hairiness of the skin, is not without good doubt: and, therefore, in reference unto man, Cupid is said to be blind. Affection should not be too sharp-eyed, and love is not to be made by magnifying glasses. If things were seen as they truly are, the beauty of bodies would be much abridged. And, therefore, the wise contriver hath drawn the pictures and outsides of things softly and amiably unto the natural edge of our eyes, not leaving them able to discover those uncomely asperities, which make oyster-shells in good faces, and hedgehogs even in Venus's moles.

X

COURT not felicity too far, and weary not the favourable hand of fortune. Glorious actions have their times, extent, and non ultras. To put no end unto attempts were to make prescription of successes, and to bespeak unhappiness at the last: for the line of our lives is drawn with white and black vicissitudes, wherein the extremes hold seldom one complexion. That Pompey should obtain the surname of Great at twenty-five years, that men in their young and active days should be fortunate and perform notable things is no observation of deep wonder; they having the strength of their fates before them, nor yet acted their parts in the world for which they were brought into it; whereas men of years, matured for counsels and designs, seem to be beyond the vigour of their active fortunes, and high exploits of life, providentially ordained unto ages best agreeable unto them. And, therefore, many brave men finding their fortune grow faint, and feeling its declination, have timely withdrawn themselves from great attempts, and so escaped the ends of mighty men, disproportionable to their beginnings.* But magnanimous thoughts have so dimmed the eyes of many, that forgetting the very essence of fortune, and the vicissitude of good and evil, they apprehend no bottom in felicity; and so have been still tempted on unto mighty actions, reserved for their destructions. For fortune lays the plot

* MS. Sloan. 1874 adds thus: "Wisely stopping about the meridian of their felicities, and unwilling to hazard the favours of the descending wheel, or to fight downward in the setting arch of fortune. 'Sic longius ævum destruit ingentes animos, et vita superstes fortunæ; nisi summa dies cum fine bonorum affluit et celeri prævertit tristia leto, dedecori est fortuna prior; quisquamne secundis tradere se fatis audet nisi morte paratâ?'—Lucan 7."

of our adversities in the foundation of our felicities, blessing us in the first quadrate, to blast us more sharply in the last. And since in the highest felicities there lieth a capacity of the lowest miseries, she hath this advantage from our happiness to make us truly miserable: for to become acutely miserable we are to be first happy. Affliction smarts most in the most happy state, as having somewhat in it of Belisarius at beggar's bush, or Bajazet in the grate. And this the fallen angels severely understand; who have acted their first part in heaven, are made sharply miserable by transition, and more afflictively feel the contrary state of hell.*

XI

CARRY no careless eye upon the unexpected scenes of things; but ponder the acts of Providence in the public ends of great and notable men, set out unto the view of all for no common memorandums.[a] The tragical exits and unexpected periods of some

* MS. Sloan. 1874 substitutes here:—"And this is the observable course; not only in this visible stage of things, but may be feared in our second beings and everlasting selves; wherein the good things past are seconded by the bad to come: and many to whom the embraces of fortune are open here, may find Abraham's arms shut unto him hereafter; which wakes serious consideration, not so much to pity as envy some men's infelicities, wherein, considering the circle of both our beings, and the succession of good unto evil, tyranny may sometimes prove courteous, and malice mercifully cruel. Wherein, notwithstanding, if swelling beginnings have found uncomfortable conclusions, it is by the method and justice of providence equalizing one with the other, and reducing the sum of the whole unto a mediocrity by the balance of extremities: that in the sum the felicities of great ones hold truth and parity with most that are below them: whereby the minor favourites of fortune which incur not such sharp transitions, have no cause to whine, nor men of middle fates to murmur at their indifferences.

"By this method of providence the devil himself is deluded; who maligning us at all points, and bearing felicity from us even in this earthly being, he becomes assistant unto our future happiness, and blessed vicissitude of the next. And this is also the unhappiness of himself, who having acted his first part in heaven, is made sharply miserable by transition, and more afflictively feels the contrary state of hell."

[a] MS. Sloan. 1874 continues:—"Whereof I, that have not seen

eminent persons, cannot but amaze considerate observators; wherein, notwithstanding, most men seem to see by extramission, without reception or self-reflection, and conceive themselves unconcerned by the fallacy of their own exemption: whereas, the mercy of God hath singled out but few to be the signals of His justice, leaving the generality of mankind to the pedagogy of example. But the inadvertency of our natures not well apprehending this favourable method and merciful decimation, and that He showeth in some what others also deserve; they entertain no sense of His hand beyond the stroke of themselves. Whereupon the whole becomes necessarily punished, and the contracted hand of God extended unto universal judgments: from whence, nevertheless, the stupidity of our tempers receives but faint impressions, and in the most tragical state of times holds but starts of good motions. So that to continue us in goodness there must be iterated returns of misery, and a circulation in afflictions is necessary.* And

the sixtieth part of time, have beheld great examples. Than the incomparable Montrose, no man acted a more fortunate part in the first scene of his adventures; but courageous loyalty continuing his attempts, he quickly felt that fortune's favours were out; and fell upon miseries smartly answering his felicities, which was the only accomplishment wanting before to make him fit for Plutarch's pen, and to parallel the lives of his heroic captains."

* MS. Sloan. 1874 adds: "Which is the amazing part of that incomprehensible patience, to condescend to act over these vicissitudes even in the despair of our betterments: and how that omnipotent spirit that would not be exasperated by our forefathers above 1600 years, should thus lastingly endure our successive transgressions, and still contend with flesh; or how he can forgive those sins which will be committed again, and accept of repentances, which must have after-penitences, is the riddle of his mercies.

"If God had not determined a settled period unto the world, and ordered the duration thereof unto His merciful intentions, it seems a kind of impossibility that he should have thus long continued it. Some think there will be another world after this. Surely God, who hath beheld the iniquity of this, will hardly make another of the same nature; and some wonder why He ever made any at all since He was so happy in Himself without it, and self-sufficiently free from all provocation, wrath, and indignation, arising

since we cannot be wise by warnings; since plagues are insignificant, except we be personally plagued; since also we cannot be punished unto amendment by proxy or commutation, nor by vicinity, but contraction; there is an unhappy necessity that we must smart in our own skins, and the provoked arm of the Almighty must fall upon ourselves. The capital sufferings of others are rather our monitions than acquitments. There is but one who died salvifically for us, and able to say unto death, hitherto shalt thou go and no farther; only one enlivening death, which makes gardens of graves, and that which was sowed in corruption to arise and flourish in glory; when death itself shall die, and living shall have no period; when the damned shall mourn at the funeral of death; when life not death shall be the wages of sin: when the second death shall prove a miserable life, and destruction shall be courted.

XII

ALTHOUGH their thoughts may seem too severe, who think that few ill-natured men go to heaven; yet it may be acknowledged that good-natured persons are best founded for that place; who enter the world with good dispositions and natural graces, more ready to be advanced by impressions from above, and Christianized unto pieties; who carry about them plain and downright dealing minds, humility, mercy, charity, and virtues acceptable unto God and man. But whatever success they may have as to heaven, they are the acceptable men on earth, and happy is he who hath his quiver full of them for his friends. These are not the dens wherein falsehood lurks, and hypocrisy hides its head; wherein frowardness makes its nest; or where malice, hard-heartedness, and oppression love to dwell; nor those by whom the poor get little, and the rich sometime lose all; men not of retracted looks, but who carry their hearts in their faces, and need not to be looked upon with perspectives; not sordidly or mischievously ingrateful; who cannot learn to ride upon the neck of the afflicted, nor load the heavy laden, but who keep the temple of Janus shut by peaceable and quiet tempers; who make not only the best friends, but the best enemies, as easier to forgive than offend, and ready to pass by the second offence before they avenge the first; who make natural royalists, obedient subjects, kind and merciful princes, verified in our own, one of the best-natured kings of this throne. Of the old Roman emperors the

from this world, which sets his justice and his mercy at perpetual contention."

best were the best-natured; though they made but a small number, and might be writ in a ring. Many of the rest were as bad men as princes; humorists rather than of good humours; and of good natural parts rather than of good natures, which did but arm their bad inclinations, and make them wittily wicked.

XIII

WITH what shift and pains we come into the world, we remember not: but 'tis commonly found no easy matter to get out of it. Many have studied to exasperate the ways of death, but fewer hours have been spent to soften that necessity. That the smoothest way unto the grave is made by bleeding, as common opinion presumeth, beside the sick and fainting languors, which accompany that effusion, the experiment in Lucan and Seneca will make us doubt; under which the noble stoic so deeply laboured, that to conceal his affliction, he was fain to retire from the sight of his wife, and not ashamed to implore the merciful hand of his physician to shorten his misery therein. Ovid,* the old heroes, and the stoics, who were so afraid of drowning, as dreading thereby the extinction of their soul, which they conceived to be a fire, stood probably in fear of an easier way of death; wherein the water, entering the possessions of air, makes a temperate suffocation, and kills as it were without a fever. Surely many, who have had the spirit to destroy themselves, have not been ingenious in the contrivance thereof. 'Twas a dull way practised by Themistocles, to overwhelm himself with bull's blood,† who, being an Athenian, might have held an easier theory of death from the state potion of his country; from which Socrates in Plato seemed not to suffer much more than from the fit of an ague. Cato is much to be pitied, who mangled himself with poniards; and Hannibal seems more subtle, who carried his delivery, not in the point but the pummel of his sword.‡

* Demito naufragium, mors mihi munus erit.

† Plutarch's lives.

‡ Pummel, wherein he is said to have carried something whereby, upon a struggle or despair, he might deliver himself from all misfortunes. Juvenal says, it was carried in a ring:

Cannarum vindex, et tanti sanguinis ultor,
Annulus.

Nor swords at hand, nor hissing darts afar,
Are doom'd t' avenge the tedious bloody war,
But poison drawn thro' a ring's hollow plate.—Dryden.

The Egyptians were merciful contrivers, who destroyed their malefactors by asps, charming their senses into an invincible sleep, and killing as it were with Hermes his rod. The Turkish emperor,* odious for other cruelty, was herein a remarkable master of mercy, killing his favourite in his sleep, and sending him from the shade into the house of darkness. He who had been thus destroyed would hardly have bled at the presence of his destroyer: when men are already dead by metaphor, and pass but from one sleep unto another, wanting herein the eminent part of severity, to feel themselves to die; and escaping the sharpest attendant of death, the lively apprehension thereof. But to learn to die, is better than to study the ways of dying. Death will find some ways to untie or cut the most Gordian knots of life, and make men's miseries as mortal as themselves; whereas evil spirits, as undying substances, are inseparable from their calamities; and, therefore, they everlastingly struggle under their angustias, and bound up with immortality can never get out of themselves.

PART THE THIRD

I

'TIS hard to find a whole age to imitate, or what century to propose for example. Some have been far more approvable than others; but virtue and vice, panegyrics and satires, scatteringly to be found in all. History sets down not only things laudable, but abominable: things which should never have been, or never have been known; so that noble patterns must be fetched here and there from single persons, rather than whole nations; and from all nations, rather than any one. The world was early bad, and the first sin the most deplorable of any. The younger world afforded the oldest men, and perhaps the best and the worst, when length of days made virtuous habits heroical and immovable, vicious, inveterate, and irreclaimable. And since 'tis said that the imaginations of their hearts were evil, only evil, and continually evil; it may be feared that their sins held pace with their lives; and their longevity swelling their impieties, the longanimity of God would no longer endure such vivacious abominations. Their impieties were surely of a deep dye, which required the whole element of water to wash them away, and overwhelmed their memories with themselves: and so shut up the first windows of time, leaving no histories of those longevous generations, when

* Solyman.

men might have been properly historians, when Adam might have read long lectures unto Methuselah, and Methuselah unto Noah. For had we been happy in just historical accounts of that unparalleled world, we might have been acquainted with wonders; and have understood not a little of the acts and undertakings of Moses his mighty men, and men of renown of old; which might have enlarged our thoughts, and made the world older unto us. For the unknown part of time shortens the estimation, if not the compute of it. What hath escaped our knowledge, falls not under our consideration; and what is and will be latent, is little better than non-existent.

II

SOME things are dictated for our instruction, some acted for our imitation; wherein 'tis best to ascend unto the highest conformity, and to the honour of the exemplar. He honours God, who imitates him; for what we virtuously imitate we approve and admire: and since we delight not to imitate inferiors, we aggrandize and magnify those we imitate; since also we are most apt to imitate those we love, we testify our affection in our imitation of the inimitable. To affect to be like, may be no imitation: to act, and not to be what we pretend to imitate, is but a mimical conformation, and carrieth no virtue in it. Lucifer imitated not God, when he said he would be like the highest: and he imitated not Jupiter, who counterfeited thunder. Where imitation can go no farther, let admiration step on, whereof there is no end in the wisest form of men. Even angels and spirits have enough to admire in their sublimer natures; admiration being the act of the creature, and not of God, who doth not admire Himself. Created natures allow of swelling hyperboles: nothing can be said hyperbolically of God, nor will His attributes admit of expressions above their own exuperances. Trismegistus his circle, whose centre is everywhere, and circumference nowhere, was no hyperbole. Words cannot exceed where they cannot express enough. Even the most winged thoughts fall at the setting out, and reach not the portal of divinity.

III

IN bivious theorems, and Janus-faced doctrines, let virtuous considerations state the determination. Look upon opinions as thou dost upon the moon, and choose not the dark hemisphere for thy contemplation. Embrace not the opacous and blind side of opinions, but that which looks most luciferously or influentially unto goodness. 'Tis better to think that there are guardian

spirits, than that there are no spirits to guard us; that vicious persons are slaves, than that there is any servitude in virtue; that times past have been better than times present, than that times were always bad; and that to be men it sufficeth to be no better than men in all ages, and so promiscuously to swim down the turbid stream, and make up the grand confusion. Sow not thy understanding with opinions, which make nothing of iniquities, and fallaciously extenuate transgressions. Look upon vices and vicious objects with hyperbolical eyes; and rather enlarge their dimensions, that their unseen deformities may not escape thy sense, and their poisonous parts and stings may appear massy and monstrous unto thee: for the undiscerned particles and atoms of evil deceive us, and we are undone by the invisibles of seeming goodness. We are only deceived in what is not discerned, and to err is but to be blind or dimsighted as to some perceptions.

IV

TO be honest in a right line,* and virtuous by epitome, be firm unto such principles of goodness, as carry in them volumes of instruction and may abridge thy labour. And since instructions are many, hold close unto those whereon the rest depend: so may we have all in a few, and the law and the prophets in sacred writ in stenography, and the Scripture in a nut-shell. To pursue the osseous and solid part of goodness, which gives stability and rectitude to all the rest; to settle on fundamental virtues, and bid early defiance unto mother-vices, which carry in their bowels the seminals of other iniquities; makes a short cut in goodness, and strikes not off an head, but the whole neck of Hydra. For we are carried into the dark lake, like the Egyptian river into the sea, by seven principal ostiaries: the mother-sins of that number are the deadly engines of evil spirits that undo us, and even evil spirits themselves; and he who is under the chains thereof is not without a possession. Mary Magdalen had more than seven devils, if these with their imps were in her; and he who is thus possessed, may literally be named "Legion." Where such plants grow and prosper, look for no champain or region void of thorns; but productions like the tree of Goa,[9] and forests of abomination.

* Linea recta brevissima.

[9] Arbor Goa de Ruyz, or Ficus Indica, whose branches send down shoots which root in the ground, from whence there successively rise others, till one tree becomes a wood.

V

GUIDE not the hand of God, nor order the finger of the Almighty unto thy will and pleasure; but sit quiet in the soft showers of providence, and favourable distributions in this world, either to thyself or others. And since not only judgments have their errands, but mercies their commissions; snatch not at every favour, nor think thyself passed by if they fall upon thy neighbour. Rake not up envious displacencies at things successful unto others, which the wise disposer of all thinks not fit for thyself. Reconcile the events of things unto both beings, that is, of this world and the next: so will there not seem so many riddles in Providence, nor various inequalities in the dispensation of things below.* If thou dost not anoint thy face, yet put not on sackcloth at the felicities of others. Repining at the good, draws on rejoicing at the evils of others: and so falls into that inhuman vice,[a] for which so few languages have a name. The blessed spirits above rejoice at our happiness below: but to be glad at the evils of one another, is beyond the malignity of hell; and falls not on evil spirits, who, though they rejoice at our unhappiness, take no pleasure at the afflictions of their own society or of their fellow natures. Degenerous heads! who must be fain to learn from such examples, and to be taught from the school of hell.

VI

GRAIN not thy vicious stains; nor deepen those swart tinctures, which temper, infirmity, or ill habits have set upon thee; and fix not, by iterated depravations, what time might efface, or virtuous washes expunge. He, who thus still advanceth in iniquity, deepeneth his deformed hue; turns a shadow into night, and makes himself a negro in the black jaundice; and so becomes one of those lost ones, the disproportionate pores of whose brains afford no entrance unto good motions, but reflect and frustrate all counsels, deaf unto the thunder of the laws, and rocks unto the cries of charitable commiserators. He who hath had the patience

* MS. Sloan. 1847 adds: "So mayst thou carry a smooth face, and sit down in contentation, without those cancerous commotions which take up every suffering, displeasing at things successful unto others; which the arch-disposer of all thinks not fit for ourselves. To rejoice only in thine (own) good, exclusively to that of others, is a stiff piece of self-love, wanting the supplying oil of benevolence and charity."

[a] Ἐπικαιρεκακία.

of Diogenes, to make orations unto statues, may more sensibly apprehend how all words fall to the ground, spent upon such a surd and earless generation of men, stupid unto all instruction, and rather requiring an exorcist than an orator for their conversion!

VII

BURDEN not the back of Aries, Leo, or Taurus, with thy faults; nor make Saturn, Mars, or Venus, guilty of thy follies. Think not to fasten thy imperfections on the stars, and so despairingly conceive thyself under a fatality of being evil. Calculate thyself within; seek not thyself in the moon, but in thine own orb or microcosmical circumference. Let celestial aspects admonish and advertise, not conclude and determine thy ways. For since good and bad stars moralize not our actions, and neither excuse or commend, acquit or condemn our good or bad deeds at the present or last bar; since some are astrologically well disposed, who are morally highly vicious; not celestial figures, but virtuous schemes, must dominate and state our actions. If we rightly understood the names whereby God calleth the stars; if we knew His name for the dog-star, or by what appellation Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn obey his will; it might be a welcome accession unto astrology, which speaks great things, and is fain to make use of appellations from Greek and barbarick systems. Whatever influences, impulsions, or inclinations there be from the lights above, it were a piece of wisdom to make one of those wise men who overrule their stars,* and with their own militia contend with the host of heaven. Unto which attempt there want not auxiliaries from the whole strength of morality, supplies from Christian ethics, influences also and illuminations from above, more powerful than the lights of heaven.

VIII

CONFOUND not the distinctions of thy life which nature hath divided; that is, youth, adolescence, manhood, and old age: nor in these divided periods, wherein thou art in a manner four, conceive thyself but one. Let every division be happy in its proper virtues, nor one vice run through all. Let each distinction have its salutary transition, and critically deliver thee from the imperfections of the former; so ordering the whole, that prudence and virtue may have the largest section. Do as a child but when thou art a child, and ride not on a reed at twenty. He who hath not taken leave of the follies of his youth, and in his maturer state

* Sapiens dominabitur astris.

scarce got out of that division, disproportionately divideth his days, crowds up the latter part of his life, and leaves too narrow a corner for the age of wisdom; and so hath room to be a man scarce longer than he hath been a youth. Rather than to make this confusion, anticipate the virtues of age, and live long without the infirmities of it. So mayst thou count up thy days as some do Adam's;* that is, by anticipation; so mayst thou be coetaneous unto thy elders, and a father unto thy contemporaries.

IX.

WHILE others are curious in the choice of good air, and chiefly solicitous for healthful habitations, study thou conversation, and be critical in thy consortion. The aspects, conjunctions, and configurations of the stars, which mutually diversify, intend, or qualify their influences, are but the varieties of their nearer or farther conversation with one another, and like the consortion of men, whereby they become better or worse, and even exchange their natures. Since men live by examples, and will be imitating something, order thy imitation to thy improvement, not thy ruin. Look not for roses in Attalus his garden,[a] or wholesome flowers in a venomous plantation. And since there is scarce any one bad, but some others are the worse for him; tempt not contagion by proximity, and hazard not thyself in the shadow of corruption. He who hath not early suffered this shipwreck, and in his younger days escaped this Charybdis, may make a happy voyage, and not come in with black sails into the port. Self-conversation, or to be alone, is better than such consortion. Some school-men tell us, that he is properly alone, with whom in the same place there is no other of the same species. Nebuchadnezzar was alone, though among the beasts of the field; and a wise man may be tolerably said to be alone, though with a rabble of people little better than beasts about him. Unthinking heads, who have not learned to be alone, are in a prison to themselves, if they be not also with others: whereas, on the contrary, they whose thoughts are in a fair, and hurry within, are sometimes fain to retire into company, to be out of the crowd of themselves. He who must needs have company, must needs have sometimes bad company. Be able to be alone. Lose not the advantage of solitude, and the society of thyself; nor be only content, but delight to be alone

* Adam, thought to be created in the state of man, about thirty years old.

[a] Attalus made a garden which contained only venomous plants.

and single with Omnipresency. He who is thus prepared, the day is not uneasy nor the night black unto him. Darkness may bound his eyes, not his imagination. In his bed he may lie, like Pompey and his sons,* in all quarters of the earth; may speculate the universe, and enjoy the whole world in the hermitage of himself. Thus the old ascetick Christians found a paradise in a desert, and with little converse on earth held a conversation in heaven; thus they astronomized in caves, and, though they beheld not the stars, had the glory of heaven before them.

X

LET the characters of good things stand indelibly in thy mind, and thy thoughts be active on them. Trust not too much unto suggestions from reminiscential amulets, or artificial memorandums. Let the mortifying Janus of Covarrubias[a] be in thy daily thoughts, not only on thy hand and signets. Rely not alone upon silent and dumb remembrances. Behold not death's heads till thou dost not see them, nor look upon mortifying objects till thou overlookest them. Forget not how assuefaction unto anything minorates the passion from it; how constant objects lose their hints, and steal an inadvertisement upon us. There is no excuse to forget what everything prompts unto us. To thoughtful observators, the whole world is a phylactery; and everything we see an item of the wisdom, power, or goodness of God. Happy are they who verify their amulets, and make their phylacteries speak in their lives and actions. To run on in despite of the revulsions and pull-backs of such remoras aggravates our transgressions. When death's heads on our hands have no influence upon our heads, and fleshless cadavers abate not the exorbitances of the flesh; when crucifixes upon men's hearts suppress not their bad commotions, and his image who was murdered for us withholds not from blood and murder; phylacteries prove but formalities, and their despised hints sharpen our condemnation.

* Pompeios juvenes Asia atque Europa, sed ipsum terra tegit Libyos.

[a] Don Sebastian de Covarrubias writ three centuries of moral emblems in Spanish. In the 88th of the second century he sets down two faces averse, and conjoined Janus-like; the one, a gallant beautiful face, the other, a death's head face, with this motto out of Ovid's Metamorphoses:—
Quid fuerim, quid simque, vide.

XI

LOOK not for whales in the Euxine sea, or expect great matters where they are not to be found. Seek not for profundity in shallowness, or fertility in a wilderness. Place not the expectations of great happiness here below, or think to find heaven on earth: wherein we must be content with embryon felicities, and fruitions of doubtful faces: for the circle of our felicities makes but short arches. In every clime we are in a Periscian state;* and with our light, our shadow and darkness walk about us. Our contentments stand upon the tops of pyramids ready to fall off, and the insecurity of their enjoyments abrupteth our tranquillities. What we magnify is magnificent; but, like to the Colossus, noble without, stuft with rubbage and coarse metal within. Even the sun, whose glorious outside we behold, may have dark and smoky entrails. In vain we admire the lustre of anything seen: that which is truly glorious is invisible. Paradise was but a part of the earth, lost not only to our fruition but our knowledge. And if, according to old dictates, no man can be said to be happy before death, the happiness of this life goes for nothing before it be over, and while we think ourselves happy we do but usurp that name. Certainly, true beatitude groweth not on earth, nor hath this world in it the expectations we have of it. He swims in oil, and can hardly avoid sinking, who hath such light foundations to support him: 'tis, therefore, happy that we have two worlds to hold on. To enjoy true happiness, we must travel into a very far country, and even out of ourselves; for the pearl we seek for is not to be found in the Indian but in the Empyrean ocean.

XII

ANSWER not the spur of fury, and be not prodigal or prodigious in revenge. Make not one in the Historia Horribilis;[a] flay not thy servant for a broken glass, nor pound him in a mortar who offendeth thee; supererogate not in the worst sense, and overdo not the necessities of evil; humour not the injustice of revenge. Be not stoically mistaken in the equality of sins, nor commutatively iniquitous in the valuation of transgressions; but weigh them in the scales of heaven, and by the weights of righteous reason. Think that revenge too high, which is but level with the

* "With shadows all around us." The Periscii are those who, living within the polar circle, see the sun move round them, and, consequently, project their shadows in all directions.—Dr. J.

[a] A book so intitled, wherein are sundry horrid accounts.

offence. Let thy arrows of revenge fly short; or be aimed like those of Jonathan, to fall beside the mark. Too many there be to whom a dead enemy smells well, and who find musk and amber in revenge. The ferity of such minds holds no rule in retaliations, requiring too often a head for a tooth, and the supreme revenge for trespasses which a night's rest should obliterate. But patient meekness takes injuries like pills, not chewing but swallowing them down, laconically suffering, and silently passing them over; while angered pride makes a noise, like Homerican Mars,* at every scratch of offences. Since women do most delight in revenge, it may seem but feminine manhood to be vindictive. If thou must needs have thy revenge of thine enemy, with a soft tongue break his bones,⁂ heap coals of fire on his head, forgive him and enjoy it. To forgive our enemies is a charming way of revenge, and a short Cæsarian conquest overcoming without a blow; laying our enemies at our feet, under sorrow, shame and repentance; leaving our foes our friends, and solicitously inclined to grateful retaliations. Thus to return upon our adversaries, is a healing way of revenge; and to do good for evil a soft and melting ultion, a method taught from heaven, to keep all smooth on earth. Common forcible ways make not an end of evil, but leave hatred and malice behind them. An enemy thus reconciled is little to be trusted, as wanting the foundation of love and charity, and but for a time restrained by disadvantage or inability. If thou hast not mercy for others, yet be not cruel unto thyself. To ruminate upon evils, to make critical notes upon injuries, and be too acute in their apprehensions, is to add unto our own tortures, to feather the arrows of our enemies, to lash ourselves with the scorpions of our foes, and to resolve to sleep no more; for injuries long dreamt on, take away at last all rest; and he sleeps but like Regulus, who busieth his head about them.

XIII

AMUSE not thyself about the riddles of future things. Study prophecies when they are become histories, and past hovering in their causes. Eye well things past and present, and let conjectural sagacity suffice for things to come. There is a sober latitude for prescience in contingencies of discoverable tempers, whereby discerning heads see sometimes beyond their eyes, and

* Tu miser exclamas, ut Stentora vincere possis,
Vel potius quantum Gradivus Homericus.—Juv.

⁂ A soft tongue breaketh the bones.—Prov. xxv. 15.

wise men become prophetical. Leave cloudy predictions to their periods, and let appointed seasons have the lot of their accomplishments. 'Tis too early to study such prophecies before they have been long made, before some train of their causes have already taken fire, lay open in part what lay obscure and before buried unto us. For the voice of prophecies is like that of whispering-places: they who are near, or at a little distance, hear nothing; those at the farthest extremity will understand all. But a retrograde cognition of times past, and things which have already been, is more satisfactory than a suspended knowledge of what is yet unexistent. And the greatest part of time being already wrapt up in things behind us; it's now somewhat late to bait after things before us; for futurity still shortens, and time present sucks in time to come. What is prophetical in one age proves historical in another, and so must hold on unto the last of time; when there will be no room for prediction, when Janus shall lose one face, and the long beard of time shall look like those of David's servants, shorn away upon one side; and when, if the expected Elias should appear, he might say much of what is past, not much of what's to come.

XIV

LIVE unto the dignity of thy nature, and leave it not disputable at last, whether thou hast been a man; or, since thou art a composition of man and beast, how thou hast predominantly passed thy days, to state the denomination. Unman not, therefore, thyself by a bestial transformation, nor realise old fables. Expose not thyself by four-footed manners unto monstrous draughts, and caricature representations. Think not after the old Pythagorean conceit, what beast thou mayst be after death. Be not under any brutal metempsychosis, while thou livest and walkest about erectly under the scheme of man. In thine own circumference, as in that of the earth, let the rational horizon be larger than the sensible, and the circle of reason than of sense: let the divine part be upward, and the region of beast below; otherwise 'tis but to live invertedly, and with thy head unto the heels of thy antipodes. Desert not thy title to a divine particle and union with invisibles. Let true knowledge and virtue tell the lower world thou art a part of the higher. Let thy thoughts be of things which have not entered into the hearts of beasts: think of things long past, and long to come: acquaint thyself with the choragium of the stars, and consider the vast expansion beyond them. Let intellectual tubes give thee a glance of things which visive organs reach not.

Have a glimpse of incomprehensibles; and thoughts of things, which thoughts but tenderly touch. Lodge immaterials in thy head; ascend unto invisibles; fill thy spirit with spirituals, with the mysteries of faith, the magnalities of religion, and thy life with the honour of God; without which, though giants in wealth and dignity, we are but dwarfs and pygmies in humanity, and may hold a pitiful rank in that triple division of mankind into heroes, men, and beasts. For though human souls are said to be equal, yet is there no small inequality in their operations; some maintain the allowable station of men; many are far below it; and some have been so divine, as to approach the apogeum of their natures, and to be in the confinium of spirits.

XV

BEHOLD thyself by inward opticks and the crystalline of thy soul. Strange it is, that in the most perfect sense there should be so many fallacies, that we are fain to make a doctrine, and often to see by art. But the greatest imperfection is in our inward sight, that is, to be ghosts unto our own eyes; and while we are so sharpsighted as to look through others, to be invisible unto ourselves; for the inward eyes are more fallacious than the outward. The vices we scoff at in others, laugh at us within ourselves. Avarice, pride, falsehood lie undiscerned and blindly in us, even to the age of blindness; and, therefore, to see ourselves interiorly, we are fain to borrow other men's eyes; wherein true friends are good informers, and censurers no bad friends. Conscience only, that can see without light, sits in the Areopagy and dark tribunal of our hearts, surveying our thoughts and condemning their obliquities. Happy is that state of vision that can see without light, though all should look as before the creation, when there was not an eye to see, or light to actuate a vision: wherein, notwithstanding, obscurity is only imaginable respectively unto eyes; for unto God there was none: eternal light was ever; created light was for the creation, not Himself; and, as He saw before the sun, may still also see without it. In the city of the new Jerusalem there is neither sun nor moon; where glorified eyes must see by the archetypal sun, or the light of God, able to illuminate intellectual eyes, and make unknown visions. Intuitive perceptions in spiritual beings may, perhaps, hold some analogy unto vision: but yet how they see us, or one another, what eye, what light, or what perception is required unto their intuition, is yet dark unto our apprehension; and even how they see God, or how unto our glorified eyes the beatifical vision will be celebrated, another

world must tell us, when perceptions will be new, and we may hope to behold invisibles.

XVI

WHEN all looks fair about, and thou seest not a cloud so big as a hand to threaten thee, forget not the wheel of things: think of sullen vicissitudes, but beat not thy brains to foreknow them. Be armed against such obscurities, rather by submission than fore-knowledge. The knowledge of future evils mortifies present felicities, and there is more content in the uncertainty or ignorance of them. This favour our Saviour vouchsafed unto Peter, when He foretold not his death in plain terms, and so by an ambiguous and cloudy delivery damped not the spirit of His disciples. But in the assured fore-knowledge of the deluge, Noah lived many years under the affliction of a flood; and Jerusalem was taken unto Jeremy, before it was besieged. And, therefore, the wisdom of astrologers, who speak of future things, hath wisely softened the severity of their doctrines; and even in their sad predictions, while they tell us of inclination not coaction from the stars, they kill us not with Stygian oaths and merciless necessity, but leave us hopes of evasion.

XVII

IF thou hast the brow to endure the name of traitor, perjured, or oppressor, yet cover thy face when ingratitude is thrown at thee. If that degenerous vice possess thee, hide thyself in the shadow of thy shame, and pollute not noble society. Grateful ingenuities are content to be obliged within some compass of retribution; and being depressed by the weight of iterated favours, may so labour under their inabilities of requital, as to abate the content from kindnesses. But narrow self-ended souls make prescription of good offices, and obliged by often favours think others still due unto them: whereas, if they but once fail, they prove so perversely ungrateful, as to make nothing of former courtesies, and to bury all that's past. Such tempers pervert the generous course of things; for they discourage the inclinations of noble minds, and make beneficency cool unto acts of obligation, whereby the grateful world should subsist, and have their consolation. Common gratitude must be kept alive by the additionary fuel of new courtesies: but generous gratitudes, though but once well obliged, without quickening repetitions or expectation of new favours, have thankful minds for ever; for they write not their obligations in sandy but marble memories, which wear not out but with themselves.

XVIII

THINK not silence the wisdom of fools; but, if rightly timed, the honour of wise men, who have not the infirmity, but the virtue of taciturnity; and speak not out of the abundance, but the well-weighed thoughts of their hearts. Such silence may be eloquence, and speak thy worth above the power of words. Make such a one thy friend, in whom princes may be happy, and great counsels successful. Let him have the key of thy heart, who hath the lock of his own, which no temptation can open; where thy secrets may lastingly lie, like the lamp in Olybius his urn,* alive, and light, but close and invisible.

XIX

LET thy oaths be sacred, and promises be made upon the altar of thy heart. Call not Jove[๑] to witness with a stone in one hand, and a straw in another; and so make chaff and stubble of thy vows. Worldly spirits, whose interest is their belief, make cobwebs of obligations; and, if they can find ways to elude the urn of the Prætor, will trust the thunderbolt of Jupiter: and, therefore, if they should as deeply swear as Osman to Bethlem Gabor;[๑] yet whether they would be bound by those chains, and not find ways to cut such Gordian knots, we could have no just assurance. But honest men's words are Stygian oaths, and promises inviolable. These are not the men for whom the fetters of law were first forged; they needed not the solemnness of oaths; by keeping their faith they swear, and evacuate such confirmations.[๑]

XX

THOUGH the world be histrionical, and most men live ironically, yet be thou what thou singly art, and personate only thyself. Swim smoothly in the stream of thy nature, and live but one man. To single hearts doubling is discruciating: such tempers must sweat to dissemble, and prove but hypocritical hypocrites. Simulation must be short: men do not easily continue a counterfeiting life, or dissemble unto death. He who counterfeiteth, acts a part; and is, as it were, out of himself: which, if long, proves so irksome, that men are glad to pull off their vizards, and resume

* Which after many hundred years was found burning under ground, and went out as soon as the air came to it.

๑ Jovem lapide jurare.

๑ See the oath of Sultan Osman, in his life, in the addition to Knoll's Turkish history.

๑ Colendo fidem jurant.—Curtius.

themselves again; no practice being able to naturalize such unnaturals, or make a man rest content not to be himself. And, therefore, since sincerity is thy temper, let veracity be thy virtue, in words, manners, and actions. To offer at iniquities, which have so little foundations in thee, were to be vicious up-hill, and strain for thy condemnation. Persons viciously inclined, want no wheels to make them actively vicious; as having the elater and spring of their own natures to facilitate their iniquities. And, therefore, so many, who are sinistrous unto good actions, are ambi-dexterous unto bad; and Vulcans in virtuous paths, Achilleses in vicious motions.

XXI

REST not in the high-strained paradoxes of old philosophy, supported by naked reason, and the reward of mortal felicity; but labour in the ethics of faith, built upon heavenly assistance, and the happiness of both beings. Understand the rules, but swear not unto the doctrines of Zeno or Epicurus. Look beyond Antoninus, and terminate not thy morals in Seneca or Epictetus. Let not the twelve but the two tables be thy law: let Pythagoras be thy remembrancer, not thy textuary and final instructor: and learn the vanity of the world, rather from Solomon than Phocylides. Sleep not in the dogmas of the Peripatus, Academy, or Porticus. Be a moralist of the mount, an Epictetus in the faith, and Christianize thy notions.

XXII

IN seventy or eighty years, a man may have a deep gust of the world; know what it is, what it can afford, and what 'tis to have been a man. Such a latitude of years may hold a considerable corner in the general map of time; and a man may have a curt epitome of the whole course thereof in the days of his own life; may clearly see he hath but acted over his forefathers; what it was to live in ages past, and what living will be in all ages to come. He is like to be the best judge of time, who hath lived to see about the sixtieth part thereof. Persons of short times may know what 'tis to live, but not the life of man, who, having little behind them, are but Januses of one face, and know not singularities enough to raise axioms of this world: but such a compass of years will show new examples of old things, parallelisms of occurrences through the whole course of time, and nothing be monstrous unto him; who may in that time understand not only the varieties of men, but the variation of himself, and how many men he hath been in that extent of time.

He may have a close apprehension what is to be forgotten, while he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarce the friends of his youth; and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time oblivion will look upon himself. His progeny may never be his posterity; he may go out of the world less related than he came into it; and considering the frequent mortality in friends and relations, in such a term of time, he may pass away divers years in sorrow and black habits, and leave none to mourn for himself; orbity may be his inheritance, and riches his repentance.

In such a thread of time, and long observation of men, he may acquire a physiognomical intuitive knowledge; judge the interiors by the outside, and raise conjectures at first sight; and knowing what men have been, what they are, what children probably will be, may in the present age behold a good part and the temper of the next; and since so many live by the rules of constitution, and so few overcome their temperamental inclinations, make no improbable predictions.

Such a portion of time will afford a large prospect backward, and authentic reflections how far he hath performed the great intention of his being, in the honour of his Maker: whether he hath made good the principles of his nature, and what he was made to be; what characteristic and special mark he hath left, to be observable in his generation; whether he hath lived to purpose or in vain; and what he hath added, acted, or performed, that might considerably speak him a man.

In such an age, delights will be undelightful, and pleasures grow stale unto him; antiquated theorems will revive, and Solomon's maxims be demonstrations unto him; hopes or presumptions be over, and despair grow up of any satisfaction below. And having been long tossed in the ocean of this world, he will by that time feel the in-draught of another, unto which this seems but preparatory, and without it of no high value. He will experimentally find the emptiness of all things, and the nothing of what is past; and wisely grounding upon true Christian expectations, finding so much past, will wholly fix upon what is to come. He will long for perpetuity, and live as though he made haste to be happy. The last may prove the prime part of his life, and those his best days which he lived nearest heaven.

XXIII

LIVE happy in the Elysium of a virtuously composed mind, and let intellectual contents exceed the delights wherein mere plea-

surists place their paradise. Bear not too slack reins upon pleasure, nor let complexion or contagion betray thee unto the exorbitancy of delight. Make pleasure thy recreation or intermissive relaxation, not thy Diana, life, and profession. Voluptuousness is as insatiable as covetousness. Tranquillity is better than jollity, and to appease pain than to invent pleasure. Our hard entrance into the world, our miserable going out of it, our sicknesses, disturbances, and sad rencounters in it, do clamorously tell us we come not into the world to run a race of delight, but to perform the sober acts and serious purposes of man; which to omit were foully to miscarry in the advantage of humanity, to play away an uniterable life, and to have lived in vain. Forget not the capital end, and frustrate not the opportunity of once living. Dream not of any kind of metempsychosis or transanimation, but into thine own body, and that after a long time; and then also unto wail or bliss, according to thy first and fundamental life. Upon a curricle in this world depends a long course of the next, and upon a narrow scene here an endless expansion hereafter. In vain some think to have an end of their beings with their lives. Things cannot get out of their natures, or be or not be in despite of their constitutions. Rational existences in heaven perish not at all, and but partially on earth: that which is thus once, will in some way be always: the first living human soul is still alive, and all Adam hath found no period.

XXIV

SINCE the stars of heaven do differ in glory; since it hath pleased the Almighty hand to honour the north pole with lights above the south; since there are some stars so bright that they can hardly be looked on, some so dim that they can scarce be seen, and vast numbers not to be seen at all, even by artificial eyes; read thou the earth in heaven, and things below from above. Look contentedly upon the scattered difference of things, and expect not equality in lustre, dignity, or perfection, in regions or persons below; where numerous numbers must be content to stand like lacteous or nebulous stars, little taken notice of, or dim in their generations. All which may be contentedly allowable in the affairs and ends of this world, and in suspension unto what will be in the order of things hereafter, and the new system of mankind which will be in the world to come; when the last may be the first, and the first the last; when Lazarus may sit above Cæsar, and the just, obscure on earth, shall shine like the sun in heaven; when personations shall cease, and histrionism of

happiness be over; when reality shall rule, and all shall be as they shall be for ever.

XXV

WHEN the stoic said that life* would not be accepted, if it were offered unto such as knew it, he spoke too meanly of that state of being which placeth us in the form of men. It more depreciates the value of this life, that men would not live it over again; for although they would still live on, yet few or none can endure to think of being twice the same men upon earth, and some had rather never have lived than to tread over their days once more. Cicero in a prosperous state had not the patience to think of beginning in a cradle again. Job would not only curse the day of his nativity, but also of his renascency, if he were to act over his disasters and the miseries of the dunghill. But the greatest underweening of this life is to undervalue that unto which this is but exordial, or a passage leading unto it. The great advantage of this mean life is thereby to stand in a capacity of a better; for the colonies of heaven must be drawn from earth, and the sons of the first Adam are only heirs unto the second. Thus Adam came into this world with the power also of another; not only to replenish the earth, but the everlasting mansions of heaven. Where we were when the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy,[℞] He must answer who asked it; who understands entities of preordination, and beings yet unbeing; who hath in His intellect the ideal existences of things, and entities before their extances. Though it looks but like an imaginary kind of existency, to be before we are; yet since we are under the decree or prescience of a sure and omnipotent power, it may be somewhat more than a non-entity, to be in that mind unto which all things are present.

XXVI

IF the end of the world shall have the same foregoing signs, as the period of empires, states, and dominions in it, that is, corruption of manners, inhuman degenerations, and deluge of iniquities; it may be doubted, whether that final time be so far off, of whose day and hour there can be no prescience. But while all men doubt, and none can determine how long the world shall last, some may wonder that it hath spun out so long and unto our days. For if

* Vitam nemo acciperet, si daretur scientibus.—Seneca.

℞ Job xxxviii.

the Almighty had not determined a fixed duration unto it, according to His mighty and merciful designments in it; if He had not said unto it, as He did unto a part of it, hitherto shalt thou go and no farther; if we consider the incessant and cutting provocations from the earth; it is not without amazement, how His patience hath permitted so long a continuance unto it; how He, who cursed the earth in the first days of the first man, and drowned it in the tenth generation after, should thus lastingly contend with flesh, and yet defer the last flames. For since He is sharply provoked every moment, yet punisheth to pardon, and forgives to forgive again; what patience could be content to act over such vicissitudes, or accept of repentances which must have after-penitences, His goodness can only tell us. And surely if the patience of heaven were not proportionable unto the provocations from earth, there needed an intercessor not only for the sins, but the duration of this world, and to lead it up unto the present computation. Without such a merciful longanimity, the heavens would never be so aged as to grow old like a garment. It were in vain to infer from the doctrine of the sphere, that the time might come, when Capella, a noble northern star, would have its motion in the equator; that the northern zodiacal signs would at length be the southern, the southern the northern, and Capricorn become our Cancer. However, therefore, the wisdom of the Creator hath ordered the duration of the world, yet since the end thereof brings the accomplishment of our happiness, since some would be content that it should have no end, since evil men and spirits do fear it may be too short, since good men hope it may not be too long; the prayer of the saints under the altar will be the supplication of the righteous world, that his mercy would abridge their languishing expectation, and hasten the accomplishment of their happy state to come.

XXVII

THOUGH good men are often taken away from the evil to come; though some in evil days have been glad that they were old, nor long to behold the iniquities of a wicked world, or judgments threatened by them; yet is it no small satisfaction unto honest minds, to leave the world in virtuous well-tempered times, under a prospect of good to come, and continuation of worthy ways acceptable unto God and man. Men who die in deplorable days, which they regretfully behold, have not their eyes closed with the like content; while they cannot avoid the thoughts of proceeding or growing enormities, displeasing unto that spirit unto

whom they are then going, whose honour they desire in all times and throughout all generations. If Lucifer could be freed from his dismal place, he would little care though the rest were left behind. Too many there may be of Nero's mind,* who, if their own turn were served, would not regard what became of others; and when they die themselves, care not if all perish. But good men's wishes extend beyond their lives, for the happiness of times to come, and never to be known unto them. And, therefore, while so many question prayers for the dead, they charitably pray for those who are not yet alive; they are not so enviously ambitious to go to heaven by themselves; they cannot but humbly wish, that the little flock might be greater, the narrow gate wider, and that, as many are called, so not a few might be chosen.

XXVIII

THAT a greater number of angels remained in heaven, than fell from it, the schoolmen will tell us; that the number of blessed souls will not come short of that vast number of fallen spirits, we have the favourable calculation of others. What age or century hath sent most souls unto heaven, he can tell who vouchsafeth that honour unto them. Though the number of the blessed must be complete before the world can pass away; yet since the world itself seems in the wane, and we have no such comfortable prognosticks of latter times; since a greater part of time is spun than is to come, and the blessed roll already much replenished; happy are those pieties, which solicitously look about, and hasten to make one of that already much filled and abbreviated list to come.

XXIX

THINK not thy time short in this world, since the world itself is not long. The created world is but a small parenthesis in eternity, and a short interposition, for a time, between such a state of duration as was before it and may be after it. And if we should allow of the old tradition, that the world should last six thousand years, it could scarce have the name of old, since the first man lived near a sixth part thereof, and seven Methuselahs would exceed its whole duration. However, to palliate the shortness of our lives, and somewhat to compensate our brief term in this world, it's good to know as much as we can of it; and also, so far as possibly in us lieth, to hold such a theory of times past, as though we had

* Nero often had this saying in his mouth, Ἐμοῦ θανόντος γαῖα μιχθήτω πυρί: "when I am once dead, let the earth and fire be jumbled together."—Dr. J.

seen the same. He who hath thus considered the world, as also how therein things long past have been answered by things present; how matters in one age have been acted over in another; and how there is nothing new under the sun; may conceive himself in some manner to have lived from the beginning, and be as old as the world; and if he should still live on, 'twould be but the same thing.

XXX*

LASTLY; if length of days be thy portion, make it not thy expectation. Reckon not upon long life: think every day the last, and live always beyond thy account. He that so often surviveth his expectation lives many lives, and will scarce complain of the shortness of his days. Time past is gone like a shadow; make time to come present. Approximate thy latter times by present apprehensions of them: be like a neighbour unto the grave, and think there is but little to come. And since there is something of us that will still live on, join both lives together, and live in one but for the other. He who thus ordereth the purposes of this life, will never be far from the next; and is in some manner already in it, by a happy conformity, and close apprehension of it. And if, as we have elsewhere declared, any have been so happy, as personally to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasy, exolution, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, and ingression into the divine shadow, according to mystical theology, they have already had an handsome anticipation of heaven; the world is in a manner over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

* Sect. XXX. This section terminating at the words "and close apprehension of it," concludes the Letter to a Friend.

ON DREAMS.

HALF our days we pass in the shadow of the earth; and the brother of death exacteth a third part of our lives. A good part of our sleep is peered out with visions and fantastical objects, wherein we are confessedly deceived. The day supplieth us with truths; the night with fictions and falsehoods, which uncomfortably divide the natural account of our beings. And, therefore, having passed the day in sober labours and rational enquiries of truth, we are fain to betake ourselves unto such a state of being, wherein the soberest heads have acted all the monstrosities of melancholy, and which unto open eyes are no better than folly and madness.

Happy are they that go to bed with grand music, like Pythagoras, or have ways to compose the fantastical spirit, whose unruly wanderings take off inward sleep, filling our heads with St. Anthony's visions, and the dreams of Lipara in the sober chambers of rest.

Virtuous thoughts of the day lay up good treasures for the night; whereby the impressions of imaginary forms arise into sober similitudes, acceptable unto our slumbering selves and preparatory unto divine impressions. Hereby Solomon's sleep was happy. Thus prepared, Jacob might well dream of angels upon a pillow of stone. And the best sleep of Adam might be the best of any after.

That there should be divine dreams seems unreasonably doubted by Aristotle. That there are demoniacal dreams we have little reason to doubt. Why may there not be angelical? If there be guardian spirits, they may not be inactively about us in sleep; but may sometimes order our dreams: and many strange hints, instigations, or discourses, which are so amazing unto us, may arise from such foundations.

But the phantasms of sleep do commonly walk in the great road of natural and animal dreams, wherein the thoughts or actions of the day are acted over and echoed in the night. Who can therefore wonder that Chrysostom should dream of St. Paul, who daily read his epistles; or than Cardan, whose head was so taken up about the stars, should dream that his soul was in the moon! Pious persons, whose thoughts are daily busied about heaven, and the blessed state thereof, can hardly escape the nightly phantasms of it, which though sometimes taken for illuminations, or divine dreams, yet rightly perpended may prove but animal visions, and natural night-scenes of their awaking contemplations.

Many dreams are made out by sagacious exposition, and from the signature of their subjects; carrying their interpretation in their fundamental sense and mystery of similitude, whereby, he that understands upon what natural fundamental every notion dependeth, may, by symbolical adaptation, hold a ready way to read the characters of Morpheus. In dreams of such a nature, Artemidorus, Achmet, and Astrampsichus, from Greek, Egyptian, and Arabian oneiro-criticism, may hint some interpretation: who, while we read of a ladder in Jacob's dream, will tell us that ladders and scalary ascents signify preferment; and while we consider the dream of Pharaoh, do teach us that rivers overflowing speak plenty, lean oxen, famine and scarcity; and therefore it was but reasonable in Pharaoh to demand the interpretation from his magicians, who, being Egyptians, should have been well versed in symbols and the hieroglyphical notions of things. The greatest tyrant in such divinations was Nabuchodonosor, while, besides the interpretation, he demanded the dream itself; which being probably determined by divine immission, might escape the common road of phantasms, that might have been traced by Satan.

When Alexander, going to besiege Tyre, dreamt of a Satyr, it was no hard exposition for a Grecian to say, "Tyre will be thine." He that dreamed that he saw his father washed by Jupiter and anointed by the sun, had cause to fear that he might be crucified, whereby his body would be washed by the rain, and drop by the heat of the sun. The dream of Vespasian was of harder exposition; as also that of the emperor Mauritius, concerning his successor Phocas. And a man might have been hard put to it, to interpret the language of Æsculapius, when to a consumptive person he held forth his fingers; implying thereby that his cure lay in dates, from the homonomy of the Greek, which signifies dates and fingers.

We owe unto dreams that Galen was a physician, Dion an historian, and that the world hath seen some notable pieces of Cardan; yet, he that should order his affairs by dreams, or make the night a rule unto the day, might be ridiculously deluded;* where-

* Compare the closing passage of "The Garden of Cyrus:"
"But the quincunx of heaven runs low, and 'tis time to close the five ports of knowledge. We are unwilling to spin out our awaking thoughts into the phantasms of sleep, which often continueth precogitations; making cables of cobwebs, and wilder-

in Cicero is much to be pitied, who having excellently discoursed of the vanity of dreams, was yet undone by the flattery of his own, which urged him to apply himself unto Augustus.
However dreams may be fallacious concerning outward events, yet may they be truly significant at home; and whereby we may more sensibly understand ourselves. Men act in sleep with some conformity unto their awaked senses; and consolations or discouragements may be drawn from dreams which intimately tell us ourselves. Luther was not like to fear a spirit in the night, when such an apparition would not terrify him in the day. Alexander would hardly have run away in the sharpest combats of sleep, nor Demosthenes have stood stoutly to it, who was scarce able to do it in his prepared senses. Persons of radical integrity will not easily be perverted in their dreams, nor noble minds do pitiful things in sleep. Crassus would have hardly been bountiful in a dream, whose fist was so close awake. But a man might have lived all his life upon the sleeping hand of Antonius.
There is an art to make dreams, as well as their interpretations; and physicians will tell us that some food makes turbulent, some gives quiet, dreams. Cato, who doated upon cabbage, might find

nesses of handsome groves. Beside Hippocrates hath spoke so little, and the oneirocritical masters have left such frigid interpretations from plants, that there is little encouragement to dream of Paradise itself. Nor will the sweetest delight of gardens afford much comfort in sleep; wherein the dulness of that sense shakes hands with delectable odours; and though in the bed of Cleopatra, can hardly with any delight raise up the ghost of a rose.
Night, which Pagan theology could make the daughter of Chaos, affords no advantage to the description of order; although no lower than that mass can we derive its genealogy. All things began in order, so shall they end, and so shall they begin again; according to the ordainer of order and mystical mathematicks of the city of heaven.
Though Somnus in Homer be sent to rouse up Agamemnon, I find no such effects in these drowsy approaches of sleep. To keep our eyes open longer, were but to act our Antipodes. The huntsmen are up in America, and they are already past their first sleep in Persia. But who can be drowsy at that hour which freed us from everlasting sleep? or have slumbering thoughts at that time, when sleep itself must end, and as some conjecture all shall awake again."

the crude effects thereof in his sleep; wherein the Egyptians might find some advantage by their superstitious abstinence from onions. Pythagoras might have calmer sleeps, if he totally abstained from beans. Even Daniel, the great interpreter of dreams, in his leguminous diet, seems to have chosen no advantageous food for quiet sleeps, according to Grecian physic.

To add unto the delusion of dreams, the fantastical objects seem greater than they are; and being beheld in the vaporous state of sleep, enlarge their diameters unto us; whereby it may prove more easy to dream of giants than pigmies. Democritus might seldom dream of atoms, who so often thought of them. He almost might dream himself a bubble extending unto the eighth sphere. A little water makes a sea; a small puff of wind a tempest. A grain of sulphur kindled in the blood may make a flame like Ætna; and a small spark in the bowels of Olympias a lightning over all the chamber.

But, beside these innocent delusions, there is a sinful state of dreams. Death alone, not sleep, is able to put an end unto sin; and there may be a night-book of our iniquities; for beside the transgressions of the day, casuists will tell us of mortal sins in dreams, arising from evil precogitations; meanwhile human law regards not noctambulos; and if a night-walker should break his neck, or kill a man, takes no notice of it.

Dionysius was absurdly tyrannical to kill a man for dreaming that he had killed him; and really to take away his life, who had but fantastically taken away his. Lamia was ridiculously unjust to sue a young man for a reward, who had confessed that pleasure from her in a dream which she had denied unto his awaking senses: conceiving that she had merited somewhat from his fantastical fruition and shadow of herself. If there be such debts, we owe deeply unto sympathies; but the common spirit of the world must be ready in such arrearages.

If some have swooned, they may have also died in dreams, since death is but a confirmed swooning. Whether Plato died in a dream, as some deliver, he must rise again to inform us. That some have never dreamed, is as improbable as that some have never laughed. That children dream not the first half-year; that men dream not in some countries, with many more, are unto me sick men's dreams; dreams out of the ivory gate, and visions before midnight.

THE END.

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